

# **An ABC *of* English Literature**

**Fourth Edition**



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**Dr M Mofizur Rahman**

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# 1

## Literary Terms

### Alliteration:

Repetition of a consonant at the beginning of two or more words or stressed syllables. Notice the following examples:

**"Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux".**

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*).

Here "p" has been repeated thrice and "b" twice. So there are two cases of alliteration in this line.

More examples:

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,

The furrow followed free;

(Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner")

Here "f" and "b" have been repeated.

**"To spend too much time in studies is sloth;"**

(Bacon: "Of Studies")

Here "s" has been repeated.

**"Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,"**

(Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner")

In this line two words begin with "b" and two words with "g". In the word "velvet", "v" is repeated at the beginning of two stressed syllables—"vel" and "vet".

Similar alliteration is in each of these words: **fulfil, fruitful, bramble, disdain**, etc.



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How often do we use alliteration? Look at these: *Good God, be beauty, World Wide Web (www), Mickey Mouse, Bangladesh Bima American Airlines*, etc. Alliteration is used for musical effect [see also *Assonance, Consonance*]

### Allusion:

An implicit or indirect reference to another work of literature, historical or mythical person or event.

Example:

Not half so fixed the Trojan could remain,  
While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain.

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

Here is an allusion to the dilemma of Aeneas, the hero of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Aeneas falls in love with Dido, the queen of Carthage. Dido implores Aeneas to marry her and get settled permanently in Carthage. Aeneas was in dilemma. He had a noble duty to find out new territory for the Trojans. But he was also deeply in love with Dido. He was torn between love and duty. However, he finally decides to continue his voyage in search of a permanent empire for the Trojans. This dilemma of Aeneas has been recalled here to suggest the intensity of Belinda's crisis.

More examples:

The *wingéd boy* I knew;

But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?

(Keats: "Ode to Psyche")

The "*wingéd boy*" is an allusion to Cupid, the god of love.

Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path

Through the sad heart of *Ruth*, when, sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn;

(Keats: "Ode to a Nightingale")

These lines allude to the suffering of Ruth, a character of the *Old Testament*.

Here is another example:

Imagine with thy self, courteous Reader, how often I then wished  
for the Tongue of *Demosthenes* or *Cicero*, that might have  
enabled me to celebrate the praise of my own dear native  
Country in a Style equal to its Merits and Felicity.

(Swift: *Gulliver's Travels*, Part II)

The allusion in these lines is to the power of eloquence of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*.

An allusion, which clarifies meanings and suggests a lot in a few words, may make a literary work difficult but it enriches its literary quality.

### **Anapaest:**

A metrical foot comprising three syllables of which the first two are unstressed and the third is stressed. Examples:

Like ă chíld / fròm thě wómb, / líke ă ghóst / fròm thě tómb,  
Í ărise / ănd ũnbuıld / ít ăgain. (Shelley: "The Cloud")

Whén Í thínk / ǒf mý ówn/ năţive lănd,  
Ín ă mó/měnt Í seém/ tǒ bě thére;

(W. Cowper: "The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk")

The use of anapaest gives swiftness to the movement of the verse line in which it is used. When the meanings or the events demand easeful swift movements, poets create the illusion of swift movements by the uses of anapaest.

### **Anaphora:**

Repetition of a word or phrase at the beginnings of two or more successive verse lines, clauses, or sentences. Examples:

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

(Shakespeare: "Sonnet XVIII")



In every cry of every man,  
 In every Infant's cry of fear,  
 In every voice, in every ban,  
 The mind-forg'd manacles I hear: (W. Blake: "London")

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way...

(Charles Dickens: *A Tale of Two Cities*)

In Martin Luther King Jr's famous speech, "I Have a Dream", there are two uses of anaphora. "I have a dream" and "with this faith" have been repeated several times.

Writers use anaphora to emphasize the points they want to make.

### anti-climax or Bathos:

statement in which there is a sudden fall from the serious to the trivial or from the sublime to the ridiculous. Examples:

Not louder shrieks to pitying heaven are cast,  
 When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last;  
 (Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

Here is a sudden fall of importance from husbands to dogs.

Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,  
 Or some frail china jar receive a flaw,  
 (Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

Here is a sudden fall from the importance of virginity to the brittleness of chinaware. This sudden fall is a case of anti-climax that suggests that Belinda's virginity is as brittle as that of a china jar.



But in the course of one revolving moon  
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;

(Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel*)

Here is a sudden fall from several important positions to that of a clown.

So over violent or over civil  
That every man with him was God or Devil.

(Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel*)

Here is a sudden fall from God to devil.

Poets use anti-climax for provoking laughter and satiric purposes.

### Aphorism:

A terse, memorable expression of a universal truth. Examples:

"Wives are young men's mistresses; companions for middle age; and old men's nurses."

(Bacon: "Of Marriage and Single Life")

"Men fear death, as children fear to go in the dark;"

(Bacon: "Of Death")

"That it is impossible to love and to be wise."

(Bacon: "Of Love")

"To err is human, to forgive divine."

(Pope: *An Essay on Criticism*)

"Authority forgets a dying king"

(Tennyson: "Morte d' Arthur")

The use of aphorism reflects the range of an author's experience and adds universality to the text in which it is used.

Aphorism is different from a proverb: a proverb is an anonymous expression of a general truth while an aphorism is a truth taken out of

one's personal experience. Proverbs are traditional but aphorisms are individual. "Man proposes, God disposes", is an example of proverb. Aphorism is also different from epigrams. [see *Epigram*]

### **Apostrophe:**

An address to someone absent or something abstract as if the person or the thing were present. It is often introduced by the exclamation "O". Shelley makes use of apostrophe in "Ode to the West Wind" at least seven times. Here is one of them:

**O Wind,**  
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Pope also uses Anaphora many times in *The Rape of the Lock*. Here is one:

**"O wretched maid!"** she spreads her hands, and cried  
(While *Hampton's* echoes, "Wretched maid!" replied)

Here the maid who helped Belinda in her preparation for the day has been addressed. The maid is absent at the place where Belinda wails for the loss of one of her locks.

Here is an example from Keats's "To Autumn":

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;

(Keats: "To Autumn")

Here the speaker addresses the personified "Autumn" throughout the poem. It is an example of *expanded apostrophe*.

### **Archaism:**

Use of a word or a style of writing which has already been old-fashioned. For example:

Lord, thou hast examined me and knowest me.  
Thou knowest all, whether I sit down or rise up;

thou hast discerned my thoughts from afar.  
 Thou hast traced my journey and my resting places,  
 and art familiar with all my paths.

(*The Bible*, "Psalms" – 139)

Here the words "thou" for *you*, "knowest" for *know*, "art" for *are* and "hast" for *has* are archaic words. A modern writer uses archaic words to add grandeur to his writing. Coleridge uses it in many lines of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". In the first line of the following quotation there are two examples:

He *prayeth* well, who *loveth* well  
 Both man and bird and beast.

### Assonance:

Repetition of a vowel sound in nearby words (without the recurrence of consonant sounds which would make a rhyme). There is assonance in *make* and *hate* as the vowel "a" is only repeated and the consonants after it — 'ke' and 'te' — are different. But *Love* and *dove* are a case of rhyme as both vowel and consonant sounds are repeated.

Examples:

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
 Among the river salallows, borne aloft  
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;

(Keats: "To Autumn")

In these lines, "o" and "i" are repeated.

Till morning touching mountain—  
 And Jacob, waxing strong,  
 The Angel begged permission  
 To Breakfast—to return—

(Emily Dickinson: "A little East of Jordan" 59)

In these lines "a", "e", "i" and "o" are repeated.

"Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability."

(Bacon: "Of Studies")

Here 'i', and 'a' are repeated. Repetition of 'for' is a case of rhyme. Assonance, like alliteration, is used for musical effects.

### Blank Verse:

Iambic pentameter verse lines without rhyme at the end. An iambic pentameter line is a verse line of five iambic feet. In blank verse, the last word of a line does not rhyme with the last word of any of the successive lines.

Examples:

Hōw cān / Ĩ līve / wĭthōut / theē? hōw/ fōregō/  
 Thy sweet converse and love so dearly join'd,  
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn?  
 Should God create another Eve, and I  
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee  
 Would never from my heart; no, no, I feel  
 The link of nature draw me; flesh of flesh,  
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

(Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Book IX.)

All these lines, like the scanned one, are in iambic pentameter and none of the last words of these lines rhyme with any other end-word.

More Examples:

Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,  
 And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?  
 Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss,  
 Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flies!

(Marlowe: *Doctor Faustus*, Act V, Scene .

These mighty lines are written in iambic pentameter without end rhyme.

It little profits that an idle king,  
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,



Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

(Tennyson: "Ulysses")

Poets and dramatists use blank verse to avoid the monotony of traditional rhyme schemes, to use a wide variety of differing tones, to add elegance and to match the heroic or elevated voice.

[see *Iamb*; *Foot*; *Heroic Couplet*]

### Caesura:

A break or pause in the rhythmic progression in a verse line. It is indicated by the mark "||" as is shown in the following examples:

The boast of heraldry, || the pomp of power,  
 And all that beauty, || all that wealth e'er gave,

(Gray: "Elegy")

Where are the songs of Spring? || Ay, where are they?  
 Think not of them, || thou hast thy music too,—

(Keats: "To Autumn")

In friendship false, || implacable in hate,  
 Resolved to ruin || or to rule the state;

(Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel*)

"To err is human, || to forgive divine."

(Pope: *An Essay on Criticism*)

Caesura is used to bring variety in the natural rhythm. It also produces metrical subtlety and makes meanings sharp and distinct.

### Catastrophe:

Catastrophe is the dreadful consequence of the story of a tragedy. It is the final scene in which the action ends with the death of the hero and other characters. Catastrophe takes place in the last scene of *Doctor Faustus* in which Faustus begs for God's forgiveness but

Lucifer drags him to hell. In *Othello* it occurs when Othello kills Desdemona and then kills himself. The catastrophe of *Hamlet* is the death scene of Hamlet (the hero), Gertrude (the Queen), Claudius (the present king) and Laertes.

### Catharsis:

The purgation or purification of pity and fear in tragedies. A dramatic presentation of sufferings or death arouses pity and fear in the spectators to such an extent that they, after watching such scenes, feel relieved of those harmful emotions. Milton describes this state of a cleansed mind in the last line of *Samson Agonistes*: "And calm of mind all passion spent".

### Chiasmus:

The inversion in the order of words or phrases when repeated  
Examples:

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"

(Keats: "Ode on a Grecian Urn")

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair,"

(Shakespeare: *Macbeth*)

"The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man know himself to be a fool."

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act V, Scene 1)

"Better a witty fool than a foolish wit".

(Shakespeare: *Twelfth Night*, Act I, Scene V)

"Mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind."

(J. F. Kennedy: Speech to UN General Assembly, Sept. 25, 1961)

Chiasmus is used to make the meaning more impressive by with effect.

**Chorus:**

Chorus is a group of performers who sing, dance and at times take part in the action of a play. The number of persons in a chorus may be reduced from a group to a single person. According to Aristotle (*Poetics*, Chapter XII) it is one of the constituent elements of tragedy. The functions of chorus in classical tragedies are many. It—

- a) determines the structure of a Greek tragedy;
- b) creates background and sets tone and atmosphere;
- c) comments on past and present events and hints at what is coming next;
- d) sometimes takes part in action;
- e) covers the time-gap between episodes;
- f) affirms the wise views of the society;
- g) gives touches of religious solemnity and common humanity.

Chorus is an integral part of all classical tragedies. Sophocles has used it in *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Antigone*. Modern writers have also used it. Marlowe has used it in *Doctor Faustus*; Milton has used it in *Samson Agonistes*. Some modern dramatists replaced the chorus by a character. For example, the fool in *King Lear* does what the chorus would have done.

**Circumlocution or Periphrasis:**

A roundabout way of stating or writing ideas. In it several words are used where a few words can serve the purpose. For examples:

“Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,”

(Shakespeare: “Sonnet XVIII”)

Here “the eye of heaven” is a roundabout expression for the “sun”.

In Keats’ “To Autumn”, “Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness” (for Autumn), “clammy cells” (for beehive), “The red-breast” (for

robin), etc. are all examples of circumlocution. Here are two more examples:

The Peer now spreads the *glittering forfex* wide,  
 To inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.  
 Even then, before the *fatal engine* closed,  
 A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed.

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

The “glittering forfex” and the “fatal engine” are circumlocutions each of them can be replaced by “scissors”.

Poets use it to impart importance, enhance poetic beauty and, at times, provoke ironic laughter.

### Classic:

A work of literature which has stood the test of time for its timeless qualities. A classic engages such human qualities which appeal to the people of all ages, all countries and all races. **The classics** mean all the never-dying art and literature of ancient Greece and Rome. The classics are never-dying because they appeal to us, more or less, in the way they appealed to the ancient Greeks and Romans. **Modern classics** are those modern literary works which, ever since their appearance, have never lost their appeal to the readers of all countries. The word **classical** refers to Greek and Roman literature or any work of art and literature that possess the qualities of Greek and Roman literature.

Examples of ancient classics:

Sophocles' *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*; Euripides' *Medea* and *Hippolytus*; Aristophanes' *Wasps* and *Frogs*; Seneca's *Thyestes*, *Phaedra* and *Medea*; Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid* and many other ancient texts are Greek and Roman classics.



The examples of modern classics are many. Here are a few: Shakespeare's great comedies and tragedies, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*; Earnest Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*; the famous poems of Milton, Thomas Gray, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats and many many others.

**Classicism:**

The ancient doctrine of art and literature. It was developed in the pre-Christian era in Greece and Rome. It is opposite to romanticism. All or most of the following literary criteria contribute to classicism:

- a) Restraint or control (over imagination);
- b) Predominance of reason over emotion;
- c) Adherence to recognized forms;
- d) Symmetry or unity of design and aim; in drama, observance of three unities;
- e) Clarity, simplicity and balance;
- f) Respect for tradition;
- g) Elegance;
- h) Objectivity;
- i) Moral lesson;
- j) Universal subjects rather than temporal or local subjects.
- k) Lofty language.

**Climax:**

The peak of importance in a play or in a story. It is the point at which the rise of action ends and the fall of action begins. Antigone's death in Oedipus's *Antigone* is the most important event after which the action falls. Her death is the climax of the tragedy. The climax of *Macbeth* is the point at which, so far ambitious and brave, Macbeth first gets afraid at the appearance of Banquo's ghost. It is the turning

point of his fall. A statement may also have a climax. For instance "He smiles, he laughs and *he roars*". The climax is at the end of the sentence.

### Comic Relief:

A humorous scene in between serious scenes of a tragedy. Its purpose is to relieve the tension of the foregoing tragic scenes for short time, and thus, heighten the tragic effect by contrast. The comic scenes of *Doctor Faustus* are bright examples: In Act III, Scene I Wagner makes fun of the clown. This scene is a comic relief to serious scenes that precede and follow it. In *Hamlet*, the humorous dialogues between the grave diggers in Act V, Scene I, offer comic relief to the deeply tense action of its foregoing scenes and enhance the tragic effect of the subsequent scenes.

### Conceit:

Comparison between two far-fetched objects of different kinds. It surprises its readers by its ingenious discovery and delights them by its intellectual quality. A famous example is Donne's comparison between two lovers' souls and the two arms of a pair of compasses in "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning":

If they be two, they are two so  
A stiff twin compasses are two;  
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show  
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

Of the several conceits in "The Good-Morrow", here is one:

Where can we find two better hemispheres,  
Without sharp North, without declining West?

The comparison between two hemispheres and two lovers is unusual, thought provoking one, and so, it is a conceit.

**Connotation:**

The indirect meaning of a word. It is the suggestion or associated significance implied by a word.

Examples:

‘Home is the place where, when you have to go there,  
They have to take you in’.

(Frost: “The Death of the Hired Man”)

“Home” literally means a roofed structure to live in (denotation) but its connotative meaning, as it is suggested here, may be *peace*, *intimacy*, *family bond*, etc.

Thus, a “bird” is a winged biped (denotation) but the connotation of the word “bird” may be *freedom*, or *sweet voice*; “island” is piece of land surrounded by water (denotation) but its connotation is “isolated” as in the sentence “Every man is an island in a crowded city”. The “bridge party” in E. M. Forster’s *Passage to India*, literally means a party to reduce the gap between the natives and the English. But its connotative meaning is the party to discover others’ intentions through intimacy. Connotative meanings may be positive or negative. [see *Denotation*]

**Consonance:**

Repetition of consonants without similar vowels for two or more times at the end of accented syllables. For examples in “shock”, “luck” and “pick”, ‘ck’ has been repeated but the accompanying vowels are different.

“Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,”

(Shakespeare: “Sonnet XVIII”)

"A lawn about the shoulders thrown"

(R. Herrick: "Delight in Disorder")

"The young Buddhist priests were the worst of all."

(G. Orwell: "Shooting an Elephant")

### Couplet:

Two verse lines rhyming together at the end. Examples:

Blow, blow thou winter wind,

Thou art not so unkind

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII)

These trimeter lines end with the same sound, "ind", and thus, the rhyme together.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall (Nursery rhyme)

These two tetrameter lines end with the same sound, "all".

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,

But I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep.

(Robert Frost: "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening")

Each of the couples of these tetrameter lines ends with the same sound, and thus, rhyme together.

All human things are subject to decay,

And when fate summons, monarchs must obey.

(Dryden: *Mac Flecknoe*)

These iambic pentameter lines end with the same sound, and thus they rhyme together. [see *Heroic Couplet*]



**Dactyl:**

A metrical foot of three syllables of which the first one is stressed and the last two are unstressed. [see *Foot*]

Bláck wěre hěr / éyed ăs thě / bérř thăt / gróws ǒn  
thě / thórń bŷ thě / wáysĭde. (Longfellow: "Evangeline")

Here the first five feet are dactylic. The last foot is, however, a trochaic.

**Denotation:**

The direct meaning of a word. It is also called literal or dictionary meaning. The denotation of the word "bird" is a winged biped that can fly and of "man" is a wingless biped. [see *Connotation*]

**Denouement:**

The final scene of a drama or fiction in which all the problems are resolved, all the knots are untied and a satisfactory explanation of the consequences of the story is given.

**Diction:**

The selection of words in a writing or speech. A particular writer chooses a particular type of words and phrases. For example, Milton uses bombastic, unusual, allusive and Latinized words but Orwell uses simple, lucid and common words. So, the words chosen by a writer are called his diction.

**Didactic:**

A kind of writings intended to teach or instruct. Aesop's *Fables*, Alexander Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, are some of the didactic works.

### Dramatic Irony:

A dialogue or a situation which conveys one meaning to the character or characters on stage but its opposite meaning to the audience. Examples:

When Oedipus, in *Oedipus Rex*, says, "I, Oedipus, / Whose name is known afar" he believes that he is really renowned for his good activities but the members of audience know that he is opposite to what he believes. Again, when he declares death penalty for the killer of Laius, "I here pronounce my sentence upon his head", he does not know that the punishment falls on his own head but the members of audience, because of their prior knowledge of the myth, know it.

In *Macbeth*, Duncan wonders at the treason of the previous thane of Cawdor who betrayed him in the battle:

There's no art  
To find the mind's construction in the face.  
He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

(Shakespeare: *Macbeth*, Act I, Scene IV)

Duncan does not know that he has also failed to read the face of Macbeth who will soon murder him. Similarly, when Lady Macbeth, after the murder of Duncan, says—

A little water clears us of this deed.

How easy is it then! (Shakespeare: *Macbeth*: Act II, Scene II)

The audience knows that it is not easy. She also comes to know it much later in Act V, Scene I, and says: "Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

The use of dramatic irony enhances audience's pleasure and its recurrence strengthens unity of action.

## Literary Terms

### Epic Simile:

An open comparison between two dissimilar objects of which one is fairly elaborated. It is called epic simile because the epic poets introduced the tradition of this kind of simile. For example, in the following example Hector has been compared to a boar and a lion:

He was like a wild-boar or a lion when he turns this way and  
that among the hounds and huntsmen to defy them in his  
strength. (Homer: *The Iliad*, Book-XII)

In this simile the qualities of a boar and a lion are elaborated to suggest Hector's strength and bravery. Similarly, in the following epic simile from Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book IV, Dido has been compared to a wounded deer:

Sick with desire, and seeking him she loves,  
From street to street the raving Dido roves.  
So when the watchful shepherd, from the blind,  
Wounds with a random shaft the careless hind,  
Distracted with her pain she flies the woods,  
Bounds o'er the lawn, and seeks the silent floods,  
With fruitless care; for still the fatal dart  
Sticks in her side, and rankles in her heart.

The restless wandering of the wounded deer has been elaborated in detail to suggest the agony of love-sick Dido.

Milton uses the following epic simile to suggest the huge number of the fallen angels assembled at Pandemonium:

Thick swarm'd both on the ground and in the air,  
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. *As bees*  
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,  
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive  
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,

New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer  
 Their state affairs: So thick the aery crowd  
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till the signal given,  
 (Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Book I)

*Main features of an epic simile:*

- 1) It is elaborated in considerable detail. It is complete in itself.
- 2) It is mainly drawn from nature and the primary qualities of the physical nature are suggested by it. In some exceptional cases, however, history or mythology is used for its source.
- 3) It is functional and integrated with the narrative.
- 4) It is mainly used in epics.

### **Epigram:**

A brief and witty statement which is apparently self-contradictory  
 Examples:

"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."  
 (Shelley: "To a Skylark")

Here "sweetest" and "saddest" oppose each other but as we go beneath the surface level, we find that the sadder the song the deeper the impression it makes.

So all my best is dressing old words new,  
 Spending again what is already spent;  
 For as the sun is daily new and old,  
 So is my love still telling what is told.

(Shakespeare: "Sonnet LXXVI")

"The rising unto place is laborious; and by pains men come to greater pains;"  
 (Bacon: "Of Great Place")



Epigrams lead readers or listeners to think and discover the meaning of the paradox in the statement, and thus, provide the intended pleasure. They sometimes offer humour, attack the target subject and create lasting impression on the readers.

**Note:** It is difficult to distinguish an epigram from an aphorism because both of them are witty and concise. However, an epigram is a paradoxical statement while an aphorism is a statement of a principle and truth. An aphorism is didactic but an epigram is often ironic. [see *Aphorism*]

**Epigram** also means a kind of short, witty poem.

### **Epiphany:**

A moment of sudden revelation or awareness that changes the course of life of the major character of a novel or short story. James Joyce defined *epiphany* as the moment when the “soul of the commonest object . . . seems to us radiant”.

**Example:**

Stephen, the hero of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, once saw a young wading girl on the shore of the sea. The girl looked like a seabird: “She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird.” (Chapter 4) The image of the wading girl manifested *to him* as a hawk like seabird soaring high. In a flash, the sight created in him awareness of imagination—the real vocation of an artist. An artist’s imagination soaring higher and higher also reflects absolute freedom. So, later in the novel (Chapter 5) Stephen rejects all that dominated him so far— his family, homeland and religion—in order to be an artist. The wading girl is an epiphany that finally changes the course of Stephen’s life.

An epiphany signals a turning point in the plot. Sometimes it is used to change the opinion of one character about other characters, events and places after a sudden awareness of the situation. It may also be a sign of a conclusion in the story.

**Episode:**

A part of a longer story or a larger sequence.

For example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, the part that narrates Lydia's elopement and its impacts on the Bennet family is an episode. In Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, the part that describes Bluntschli's visit to Petkoff's house to return the coat is an episode. In *Aeneid*, the part which deals with the love of Dido for Aeneas is an episode. TV serials are divided into episodes which are shown in succession. Though an episode appears complete in itself, it leaves behind some clues on which the next episode is developed. An episode contributes to the total design of the story.

**Epithet:**

Basically an adjective placed before or after a person or a thing. For example: "Swift-footed Achilles", "god-like Hector", "red-haired Menelaus", "laughter-loving Aphrodite", "white-armed Helen", "Ox-eyed queen", "Athene of the flashing eyes", Alexander the Great, "weary way", "labouring clouds", etc.

An epithet is used as a substitute for the description of some of the characteristics of a person or thing.

**Exposition:**

The beginning of a play which artistically presents some of the past and present events and hints at what is coming next. It builds the background of the plot, introduces the major theme(s), character(s) and locates the story in time and place. It sets the tone of the play.

**Figures of Speech:**

The ornaments of language. They are the words and phrases that convey more than their dictionary or literal meanings. The commonly used figures of speech are: simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, etc.

For instance, the word 'log' in the sentence, "She sleeps like a *log*", is a figure of speech called simile. The literal meaning of 'log' is 'a thick piece of wood cut from a tree'. So, a log is lifeless, motionless—dead. "She" has been compared to a "log" to suggest that she sleeps very deeply as if she were dead.

The language containing figures of speech is called **figurative language**. Figurative language is different from the language of sciences because figures of speech are avoided in writings on the subjects of science.

### **Flat character:**

A flat character is a person who does not change in course of the narrative of a fictional work of literature. The features of a flat character are:

- a) He or she remains the same throughout the story of the work;
- b) He or she is simple in nature;
- c) In most cases he or she plays the role of a supporting character;

In Dickens' *Great Expectations*, Joe is a flat character because he is simple, plays a minor role and remains unchanged. Similarly, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Collins, Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet do not change. They are simple and minor characters. They are flat characters. [see *Round Character*]

### **Foot:**

A unit of two or more stressed and unstressed syllables in a verse line. Example:

"Thě cúr / fěw tólls / thě knéll / ǒf párt / ǐng dáy"

(Gray: "Elegy")

In this line there are five feet each consisting of an unstressed / ˘ / syllable followed by a stressed / ˈ / syllable. In English the following are the principal feet:

Iamb or iambus (adj. iambic) = / ˘ ˈ / = unstressed + stressed

Trochee (adj. trochaic) = / ˈ ˘ / = stressed + unstressed

Spondee (adj. spondaic) = / ˈ ˈ / = stressed + stressed

Pyrrhic (adj. Pyrrhic) = / ˘ ˘ / = unstressed + unstressed

Anapaest (adj. anapaestic) = / ˘ ˘ ˈ / = unstressed+unstressed+stressed

Dactyl (adj. dactylic) = / ˈ ˘ ˘ / = stressed+unstressed+unstressed

Bacchius = / ˘ ˈ ˈ / = unstressed + stressed + stressed

Antibacchius = / ˈ ˈ ˘ / = stressed + stressed + unstressed

Amphibrach = / ˘ ˈ ˘ / = unstressed + stressed + unstressed

Amphimacer = / ˈ ˘ ˈ / = stressed + unstressed + stressed

The most common of these feet are *iamb*, *trochee*, *anapaest* and *dactyl*. [see *Iamb*, *Anapaest*, *Trochee* and *Dactyl*]

S.T. Coleridge's "Lesson for a Boy" provides us with examples of almost all of the English feet in a poem written for a child:

Trócheë / tríps fröm / lóng tō / shórt;

Fröm lóng / tō lóng / ĩn sól / ěmn sórt

Slów spón / deé stálks; / stróng foot! / Yét ĩll / áblē

Évēr tō / cóme ũp wĭth / Dáctyl trí / sýllablē.

Yám / bícs márch / fröm shórt / tō lóng;

Wĭth ā leáp / ānd ā bóund / the swĭft Án / āpaēsts thróng

Onē sýllā / blē lóng, wĭth / ōne stórt āt / ěach síde,

Āmphíbrā / chýs hástes wĭth / ā státely / strĭde.

Fĭrst ānd lāst / beĭng lóng, / míddle shórt, / Āmphĭmā / cer

Strĭkes hĭs thún / dérĭng hoofs / líke ā próud / híghbred Rā / cer.



Among these, iambic and anapaestic feet are used in *rising rhythm* as in these feet voice gradually rises up. Similarly, trochaic and dactylic feet are used in *falling rhythm* as in these feet voice gradually falls down. Rise and fall of rhythm is significant in English verse.

### Genre or Form:

One of the types or kinds of literature. The major genres are: poetry, drama, fiction, lyric, epic, mock-epic, tragedy, comedy, novel, short story, essay, etc. [see page 73]

### Hamartia:

An error or a flaw in the character of the protagonist of a tragedy. It causes the fall of the protagonist from the zenith of his success to the nadir of his misery. It is also called **tragic flaw**. Dr. Faustus' thirst for god-like power in *Doctor Faustus*, King Lear's error of judgement in *King Lear*, Hamlet's indecision in *Hamlet*, Macbeth's high ambition in *Macbeth* and Othello's jealousy in *Othello*, are the causes of their tragic doom. Each of these flaws is known as hamartia. If the protagonist suffers and dies for his pride, the flaw in his character is called **hubris**.

### Heroic Couplet:

A pair of iambic pentameter verse lines which rhyme together.  
Example:

Bŭt wĥén / tŏ mĭs / chiĕf mŏr / tĕls bĕnd / theĭr wĭll  
Hŏw soŏn / theŷ fĭnd / fĭt ĭns / trŭménts / ŏf ĭll!

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

Each of these lines consists of five iambic feet. In other words, each line consists of five pairs of syllables and in each pair the first syllable is unstressed and the second is stressed. Such five feet arranged in a verse line are called **iambic pentameter**. When two such iambic pentameter lines end with similar sounds as "ill" in the

above lines, they are called *heroic couplet*. The meaning of this couplet is complete in itself. This kind of couplet is called **closed couplet**. Here is another example of closed couplet:

Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;

Oft she rejects, but never once offends.

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

However, the meaning of a couplet may not be complete in itself as in the following one:

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,

Looking as if she were alive; I call

(Robert Browning: "My Last Duchess")

Heroic couplets are mostly used in poems which deal with heroic actions, grand emotions and lofty thoughts. Pope and Dryden are the well-known masters of heroic couplet. [see *Foot, Couplet*]

**Hubris** : see *Hamartia*

### **Humours:**

The four kinds of human temperaments. The four fluids that determine the four temperaments are also called humours.

The theory of four temperaments was introduced by an ancient Greek physician, Hippocrates (460-370BC). According to his physiology, the four fluids—blood, phlegm, black bile (or melancholy) and yellow bile (or choler) — are analogous to the four basic elements: air, water, earth and fire. Thus, blood is as hot and moist as air; phlegm is as cold and moist as water; black bile is as cold and dry as earth; yellow bile is as hot and dry as fire. The predominance of any of these humours in a person determines his or her character. For example, the predominance of blood makes a person sanguine, joyful and amorous. The predominance of phlegm makes a person phlegmatic, dull and cowardly. The predominance of black bile makes a person melancholic, thoughtful and sentimental.

The predominance of yellow bile makes a person choleric, impatient and obstinate. Humours, therefore, mean four fluids as well as four temperaments. [see *Comedy of Humours*]

### Hyperbole:

An exaggerated statement or an extreme overstatement.

Examples:

“Ten thousand saw I at a glance,”

(Wordsworth: “Daffodils”)

From the east to western Ind  
No jewel is like Rosalind.  
Her worth being mounted on the wind  
Through all the world bears Rosalind.  
All the pictures fairest lined  
Are but black to Rosalind.

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act III, Scene II)

“Ay sir, to be honest as this world goes, is to be one man  
pick’d out of two thousand.”

(Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act II, Scene II)

I lov’d Opelia; forty thousand brothers  
Could not (with all their quantity of love)  
Make up my sum.

(Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act V, Scene I)

An hundred years should go to praise  
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;  
Two hundred to adore each breast,  
But thirty thousand to the rest;

(Andrew Marvell: “To His Coy Mistress”)

I’ll love you, dear, I’ll love you  
Till China and Africa meet,

And the river jumps over the mountain

And the salmon sing in the street,

(W.H. Auden: "As I Walked Out One Evening")

Hyperbole is used to create strong emotional response. It can be positive as well as negative. It can be a source of laughter. It can also be a bitter criticism.

### **Iamb (ímbus):**

A metrical foot which consists of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. [see *Foot*]

For examples:

Í wán/děred lóne/lý ás/ ă clóud

Thă floáts/ ǒn hígh/ ǒ'er váles/ ănd hílls,

(Wordsworth: "Daffodils")

"Whǒ háth/ nǒt seén/ theě óft/ ămíd/thý stóre?"

(Keats: "To Autumn")

### **Image:**

"Picture in words". It is a replica produced in the mind of the reader by sense perception. For example, the sentence, "The black cat is now in the dark room" reflects in our mind a picture of an animal which is not a dog or a tiger or a lion or any other animal but the small animal which is named as cat. We also understand that its colour is black. This picture of the black animal reflected in our mind is an image in this sentence.

Images appeal to human senses and the process deepens readers' understanding of literature.

Images may be classified according to the various senses which we use to perceive things: *ocular images*, *auditory images*, *olfactory*



## Literary Terms

*images, gustatory images, tactile images, kinaesthetic images and organic images.* They are discussed below:

**Ocular images** that appeal to the sense of sight.

“Rich honesty dwells like a *miser*, sir, in a *poor house*, as your *pearl* in your foul *oyster*.”

(Shakespeare : *As You Like It*, Act V, Scene IV)

As we read these words we visualize the *miser*, a *poor house* and the *pearl* in *oyster*.

**Auditory images** involve the sense of hearing.

Then in a *wailful choir* the small gnats mourn  
Among the river *sallows*, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;  
And full-grown lambs *loud bleat* from hilly *boorn*;  
Hedge crickets *sing*; and now with treble soft  
The redbreast *whistles* from a garden-croft;  
And gathering swallows *twitter* in the skies.

(Keats: “To Autumn”)

The “wailful choir”, the “loud bleat”, the “whistles” and the “twitter” appeal to the sense of hearing of a person who identifies them by their respective sounds.

**Olfactory images** involve the sense of smelling.

“Something is *rotten* in the state of Denmark.”

(Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene IV)

Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,  
Drowsed with the *fume of poppies*...

(Keats: “To Autumn”)

The “*rotten*” thing and the “*fume of poppies*” appeal to our sense of smelling.

**Gustatory images** appeal to the sense of taste.

Or by a cider-press, with patient look;  
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

(Keats: "To Autumn")

The fruit juice suggested in these lines appeals to the sense of taste.

**Tactile images** appeal to the sense of touch.

"O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been  
Cooled a long age in the deep-delv'd earth,"

(Keats: "Ode to a Nightingale")

The coldness of the wine appeals to our sense of touch. Words or phrases suggesting *heat*, *coldness*, *etching* etc. appeal to the sense of touch.

There are two other types of images which, though do not appeal to our senses, they appeal to our feelings:

**Kinaesthetic images** create sensation on nerves.

"My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains"

(Keats: "Ode to a Nightingale")

The "aches" create sensation on human nerves.

**Organic images** create feelings of hunger, thirst, weariness, etc.

"I will *drink* / Life to the lees:" (Tennyson: "Ulysses")

Images may be literal. For instance, the "*fume of poppies*", the *twitter*", the "*loud bleat*" etc. are literal since they exactly mean what they are. However, images may also be figurative. Similes, metaphors, symbols, metonymy, synecdoche, etc. are often used to create images. For example, "*rotten*" (see Olfactory images) and "*drink*" (see Organic images) are metaphors.

**Imagery:**

The collective use of images. Look at the title of the book Caroline Spurgeon wrote on all the images that Shakespeare has used in all of his plays: *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells*. The word "Imagery" in the title is singular and its pronoun is "It". It covers all the images of Shakespeare's plays. If we say imagery of "To Autumn", we mean all the images in it. It is customary to use the word "imagery" instead of "images" when we want to mean all the images of a text or of a writer. We use the plural of "imagery" when we mean all the images of two or more texts or writers.

**Innuendo:**

A figure of speech which hints at something unpleasant instead of stating it plainly. For examples:

The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,  
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

The unpleasant meaning suggested in these lines is that dinner is more important to the judges than the life of the accused.

"Some have been thought brave, because they were afraid to run away." (Proverb)

People thought that those who remained in the battlefield were brave. In fact, those soldiers were so cowardly that they even could not run away in fear of life.

"All is fair in love and war." (Proverb)

People in love and war do not obey any rule.

**Internal rhyme:**

Rhyme within a verse line. For instance:

When the voices of *children* are heard on the *green*,  
And laughing is heard on the *hill*,

My heart is at *rest* within my *breast*,  
And everything else is still.

(Blake: "Nurse's Song")

Here the word "children" rhymes with "green" as "rest" rhymes with "breast".

Coleridge excels in the use of internal rhyme in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". Here are some examples:

- a) "The guests are **met**, the feast is **set**:"
- b) "The ship was **cheered**, the harbour **cleared**,"
- c) "And he shone **bright**, and on the **right**"
- d) "The Wedding Guest he beat his **breast**,"
- e) "The ship drove **fast**, loud roared the **blast**,"
- f) "And every**day**, for food or **play**,"
- g) "In mist or **cloud**, on mast or **shroud**,"
- h) "We were the **first** that ever **burst**"

### Invocation:

A formal prayer to the Muse (the goddess of poetry) for inspiration, help and guidance at the beginning of an epic. Examples:

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring  
Of woes unnumber'd, heavenly goddess, sing!

(Homer: *The Iliad*. Trans. Pope)

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,  
Long exercised in woes, O Muse! resound;

(Homer: *The Odyssey*. Trans. Pope)

"O Muse! the causes and the crimes relate;"

(Virgil: *The Aeneid*. Trans. Dryden)

Of Man's First disobedience and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World and all our woe



With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing Heav'nly Muse ...

(Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Book I)

Usually the invocation in an epic goes together with the proposition (declaration) of its subject. Epic poets also invoke the goddess of poetry for help inside the texts.

### Irony:

A statement or a situation or an action which actually means the opposite of its surface meaning. The first sentence of *Pride and Prejudice* is an example of irony:

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

After reading the novel one, however, finds that it is not the rich man who needs a wife but, quite opposite to it, it is the marriageable girls' mother who needs rich husbands for her daughters.

An often quoted example of irony is in Antony's speech at the funeral of Caesar who was killed by Brutus. A part of the speech is quoted here:

For Brutus is an honourable man;  
So are they all, all honourable men;  
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.  
He was my friend, faithful and just to me;  
But Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And Brutus is an honourable man.  
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,  
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.  
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

(Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene II)

Antony repeats "Brutus is an honourable man" a few more times in the rest of the speech. The irony in this statement glorifying Brutus had tremendous opposite effect. Though Antony says: "Brutus is an honourable man" the Romans assembled around the dead body of Caesar understood the opposite of what Brutus says. They understood that Brutus was a dishonourable "traitor" and a despicable "villain". They immediately turned rebellious against Brutus.

Situational irony occurs when the opposite of expectation takes place. For instance, in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Part II, Chapter VI, Gulliver talks to the King very highly about the parliament, judiciary, treasury, army, war and some other aspects of England expecting the King to praise the people of England. But the King ends up with a bitter comment totally opposite to Gulliver's expectation: "I cannot but conclude the Bulk of your Natives, to be the most pernicious Race of little odious Vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the Surface of the Earth."

### **Literal Meaning:**

The dictionary or primary meaning of a word or sentence. [see *Figurative Language*]

### **Litotes:**

A figure in which the negative statement suggests a very strong affirmative. Examples:

"He is not a bad student" means "He is a good student".

"Let not Ambition mock their useful toil." (Gray: "Elegy")

It means "Let Ambition praise their useful toil".

"Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray." (Gray: "Elegy")

It means "Their sober wishes were always fulfilled."

"But Shadwell never deviates into sense." (Dryden: *Mac Flecknoe*)

It means "But Shadwell remains senseless forever".

"And my whole life, every white man's life in the East, was one long struggle not to be laughed at."

(Orwell: "Shooting an Elephant")

It means every white man had to struggle to retain his dignity in the East.

### **Machinery:**

The supernatural agents used in an epic or a mock-epic. For example, the whole battalion of the sylphs, gnomes and nymphs under Ariel's command in *The Rape of the Lock* is called the machinery of it.  
[see *Epic*]

### **Metaphor:**

An implicit comparison between two different things. It is a compressed form of simile. "Liza is *a rose*" is an example of metaphor as there is an implied comparison between the colour, softness, fragrance, beauty, etc. of the rose and those of Liza. It becomes a simile if the comparison is made explicit: Liza is *like a rose*.

In "Sonnet XVIII", the phrase, "eternal summer," in the line, "But thy eternal summer shall not fade" is a metaphor that suggests "never-ending youthfulness".

Here is another example:

All the world's a *stage*,  
And all the men and women merely players.  
They have their *exits* and their *entrances*,

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII)

The “world” has been compared to “a stage” to suggest short life on earth. “Entrances” and “exits” are also metaphors which imply birth and death respectively.

The “unweeded garden” in the following lines is another famous metaphor which means the ethically corrupted or morally polluted world.

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! oh fie, fie, 'tis an *unweeded garden*,  
That grows to seed:

(Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene II)

More examples are given below. The metaphors are in *italics*:

Out, out, *brief candle*,  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the *stage*  
And then is heard no more.

(Shakespeare: *Macbeth*, Act V, Scene V)

“She's all *states*, and all *princes*, I,”  
(John Donne: “The Sun Rising”)

“If *Winter* comes, can *Spring* be far behind?”  
(Shelley: “Ode to the West Wind”)

“With this faith we will be able to hew out of the *mountain*  
of despair a *stone* of hope.”

(Martin Luther King: “I Have a Dream”)

### Metonymy:

The name of one thing is used for another thing to which it is related. We use metonymy when we use “the crown” for the king or “the stage” for theatre. Similarly, when we use “Shakespeare” to mean his works we use metonymy. Some other examples are given below:



"Rest, rest perturbed *spirit*:"

(Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene V)

"Look on my works, ye *Mighty*, and despair!"

(Shelley: "Ozymandias")

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
To whom I leave the *sceptre* and the isle—

(Tennyson: "Ulysses")

In the first example, "spirit" has been used for ghost; in the second example, "Mighty" has been used for a powerful king; and in the third example the "sceptre" has been used for kingship or the authority to rule.

### Metre:

The arrangement of "feet" [i.e. stressed and unstressed syllables] in a verse line. A verse line is named according to the number of its foot:

A line containing one foot is called monometer.

A line containing two feet is called diameter.

A line containing three feet is called trimeter.

A line containing four feet is called tetrameter.

A line containing five feet is called pentameter.

A line containing six feet is called hexameter.

A line containing seven feet is called heptameter.

A line containing eight feet is called octameter.

Each of these meters may again be different according to the use of various types of feet. A monometer line may be iambic monometer ("Thus I/ Pass by"), trochaic monometer ("Turning/ Burning/ Changing/ Ranging"), Anapaestic monometer ("Tis in vain/ They complain"), dactylic monometer ("Wit with this/ wantonness") and so on. Similarly, a diameter may be iambic diameter, trochaic

diameter, anapaestic diameter, dactylic diameter etc. A pentameter may be iambic pentameter, trochaic pentameter, anapaestic pentameter, dactylic pentameter and the like.

**Motif:** "One of the dominant ideas in a work of literature."

### **Negative Capability:**

An ability that enables a writer to keep himself aloof from his writings. It is synonymous with objectivity. Keats who coined this phrase defines it as an ability which makes a writer "capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." Shakespeare had this ability because his personal life cannot be discovered from his plays. Keats claimed that he also had this ability. T. S. Eliot called it impersonality of art.

### **Objective Correlative:**

An image that suggests a particular emotion associated with it. For example, the sentence, "He is a Meer Zafar" evokes in the mind of the readers a sense that "He" is a betrayer. It is because 'betrayal' is associated with the name of "Meer Zafar" who betrayed Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula. So, "Meer Zafar" is an objective correlative for "betrayal". Thus, "waste land" is an objective correlative for spiritual barrenness, "rose" for love and beauty, "nightingale's song" for suppressed agony, and the like.

### **Objectivity:**

A mode of expression in which the writer's personal life remains absent from his writing. Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare and T. S. Eliot are some of the famous objective writers. No information about their lives or about their likes and dislikes is found in their great works. It is opposite to subjectivity. [see *Subjectivity, Negative Capability*]

**Onomatopoeia:**

A figure in which the sound of the words and phrases suggests the sense. In *An Essay on Criticism* Pope says about it: "The sound must seem an echo to the sense".

Examples:

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;

(Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner")

These highly alliterative lines reflect the easeful, smooth movement of the Mariner's ship.

It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,

(Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner")

This line echoes the sounds of the rough sea in the polar region.

With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;

(Keats: "To Autumn")

The rhythm in this line mirrors a picture of the up and down movement of the vines on the edge of the thatch. The vines lie along the edge of the thatch but they go down at certain points, at regular gaps, where bunches of grapes dangle because of their weight. This up and down of the vines has been indicated here by the use of alternatively stressed iambic feet.

**Oxymoron:**

A figure of speech in which two contradictory words are put together. When we use phrases like male-female, host-guest, civil war, open secret, magic realism or wise fool, we, in fact, use oxymorons. Here is a famous example:

All changed, changed utterly:

*A terrible beauty is born.*

(Yeats: "Easter 1916")

Here is another example:

I find no peace, and all my war is done:

I *fear*, and *hope*; I *burn*, and *freeze* like ice;

(Sir Thomas Wyatt: "I Find No Peace")

### Paradox:

A self-contradictory statement that hides a rational meaning. Example: "Sweet are the uses of adversity". The surface meaning of this line appears contradictory as, generally, adversity is bitter. But as we go deeper we find the truth that adversity carries within itself the sweetness of achievement.

### Persona:

The speaker in a poem or novel. The speaker is necessarily not the writer of the poem or the novel. For example, the persona of Tennyson's "Ulysses" is Ulysses, the Greek hero, not Tennyson; the persona of Browning's "My Last Duchess" is Duke of Ferrara, not Browning; the persona of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is Marlow, not Conrad, the persona of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is an omniscient observer, not Jane Austen.

There is confusion whether the first person speaker in a creative work is the author himself or a mask. In Wordsworth's "I wander lonely as a cloud" ("Daffodils"), "I" is closer to Wordsworth's actual identity. However, in most cases, "I" may be a mask (or an alter ego) of the author. Keats has used first person pronouns in his poems. For instance, "Much have I travelled", "My heart aches", "I will fly to thee", "I will be thy priest" and the like. But he has appreciated "Negative Capability" in a letter written to George and Tom Keats. T. S. Eliot has appreciated Keats for his "Negative Capability" which he calls "impersonality". Therefore, we cannot blindly say that the "I" in Keats' poems is definitely Keats himself.



To be on the safe side it is better to call the person speaking in a creative work "speaker" instead of "poet" or "novelist", even though the speaker appears to be closer to the writer's own identity. If it is evident that the speaker is a mask, we should call him "persona".

### Personification:

A figure of speech in which lifeless objects or ideas are given imaginary life. Examples:

And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips

Bidding adieu. (Keats: "Ode on Melancholy")

Here "Joy" has been imagined as a living person.

"Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?"

(Keats: "To Autumn")

Autumn has been treated as a living woman.

"There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:

(Tennyson: "Ulysses")

The vessel has been used as a living being.

### Plot:

In a literary work a plot is the logical arrangement of events designed to excite curiosity or suspense. It is the structure or scheme of a literary work.

### Plot and Story:

A story differs from a plot in that a story consists of events which take place one after another according to a time sequence but a plot comprises events which take place as effects of earlier causes.

E. M. Forster has illustrated the difference between a story and a plot with examples in his book, *Aspects of the Novel*:

The king died and then the queen died (story).

The king died and then the queen died of grief (plot).

In the first example “then” suggests time sequence—the queen died after the death of the king. In the second example “of grief” suggests cause and “died” suggests effect. Because of the death of the king the queen died. The story maintains time sequence but the plot maintains logic of cause and effect.

### Poetic Justice:

The natural judgment which gives the wicked his due punishment and the virtuous his due reward.

### Point of View:

The perspective from which the narrator tells his story. It is also called “viewpoint” or “narrative mode”. There are several types of viewpoints. Of them the following ones are most frequently used:

- i) **First person point of view:** In the first person point of view one of the characters of the narrative tells the story in his own person using first person pronouns (I, me, my, mine, we, our, us, etc.). First person narrator participates in the action of the story.
  - ii) **Third person point of view:** In the third person point of view, the narrator is an outer observer without being involved in the action of the story. It is of two types:
    - (a) The omniscient point of view;
    - (b) Limited omniscient point of view.
- (a) **Omniscient point of view:** In this mode of narrative, the narrator does not participate in the action. He or she is all-knowing and narrates thoughts and feelings of the characters using third person pronouns (he, him, she, her, they, them, it, etc.).

- (b) **Limited omniscient point of view:** In this narrative technique, the narrator tells the story in the third person but his or her knowledge remains limited to the experiences, thoughts and feelings of only one character.

### **Pun or Paronomasia:**

A play upon words which are similar in sound but different in meaning. It occurs when a single word conveys two meanings. The title of Hemingway's famous novel, *Farewell to Arms* has a pun on it. "Arms" has been used to mean weapons or war and the arms of the beloved or love. Similarly, in the title of Shaw's comedy, *Arms and the Man*, "arms" is a pun since it means both weapons and love. Here is an often quoted example of pun from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (Act III, Scene I): "Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man". The "grave man" may mean a man of grave disposition or a dead man. The word "feet" in the following lines means the metres of verse lines but it also suggests legs.

O yes, I heard them all, and more, too, for some of them had in them more *feet* than the verses would bear.

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act III, Scene II)

For my part, I had rather bear with you than *bear* you. Yet I should *bear no cross* if I did *bear* you, for I think you have no money in your purse.

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene IV)

Touchstone makes fun by punning on the word "bear" which here means 'old coins', 'tolerate', 'carry'—carrying troubles, and even carrying a child in womb.

There is another variety of pun where two words of identical sounds but different spellings are used to convey two different meanings. For examples:

- *Eat* enough and *it* will make you wise. (Proverb)
- Beggars' cries do not *reach* (arrive at) the *rich* (the wealthy).
- Cashiers *check* (scrutinize) every *cheque* (*bank instrument*) before encashment.

### Pyrrhic:

A foot of two unstressed syllables. [see *Foot*]

### Rhythm:

The sound pattern made by the rise and fall of the unstressed and stressed syllables in a verse line or speech.

### Romanticism:

A doctrine of art and literature that involves high imagination, love of nature, spontaneity, simplicity, subjectivity, individuality, supernaturalism, strong revolutionary desires, subjectivism, and Hellenic aestheticism. It is opposite to classicism or neoclassicism. The French Revolution influenced it. Romanticism first appeared in the Elizabethan Age; Wordsworth and Coleridge initiated its revival in England in 1798.

The main features of romanticism are elaborated here:

- High imagination:** Romanticism involves high imagination. It seeks an ideal condition for mankind in high soaring imagination. It rejects the fact that writers should be earth-bound, realistic and factual.
- Love of nature:** This doctrine has a strong liking for nature both for the beauty of its external objects and for the meanings underlying those objects. It emphasizes sense-perceptions of natural objects and interpretations of the underlying truths of those objects.



- c) **Primitivism or spontaneity:** The doctrine advocates for inherent human qualities. It prefers natural, elemental human qualities to those which are artificial.
- d) **Interest in the remote:** Romanticism has a nostalgic tendency. It involves the past, especially the ancient myths and medieval legends.
- e) **Simplicity in expression:** It supports the use of simple, everyday language and discourages unnecessary use of figures of speech, sonorous words and artificial expressions.
- f) **Revolutionary zeal:** It defies social restrictions, opposes harmful traditional beliefs and hopes for an absolutely free society.
- g) **Individualism:** Romanticism attaches more importance to an individual than to the society or state. For this reason, subjective perception is very important in it.
- h) **Supernaturalism:** Dealing with the unseen and mysterious powers is an important aspect of romanticism.
- i) **Experiment and innovation:** Experiments with the literary forms and techniques are a feature of romanticism. In romantic tradition, innovation has been given much importance.
- j) **Art for art's sake:** *Art for art's sake* is the slogan of romanticism.
- k) **Hellenism:** The aesthetics of the ancient Greeks, especially the sense of beauty, is also a feature of romanticism.

It should be remembered that all these features are not found in every romantic poet. Blake's poetry reflects simplicity of language and desire for a better society; Wordsworth's poetry is known for love of nature and common man; in Coleridge's poetry supernaturalism is a

dominant feature; Keats' poetry reflects Hellenism; in Shelley and Byron revolutionary zeal is remarkable. What is common in all these poets is high imagination, simple language and sympathy for common people.

There are contradictions among the features of romanticism. It is because romanticism accommodates multiplicity of views.

### **Round character:**

A round character is usually the main character who changes in course of the narrative of a fictional work of literature. The features of a round character are:

- a) He or she changes with the progress of the plot;
- b) He or she is complex in nature;
- c) He or she plays the role of the protagonist;

In Dickens' *Great Expectations*, Pip is a round character in that he is complex, plays a main role and keeps on changing. Similarly, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet are round characters since they change and play most significant roles in the novel. [see *Flat Character*]

### **Simile:**

A simile is an explicit comparison between two different things. Usually "as" and "like" are used in it. Example:

We die,  
*As your hours do*, and dry  
 Away  
*Like to the summer's rain*;  
 (Robert Herrick: "To Daffodils")

In these lines human life has been compared to summer's rain drops to suggest that a man's life is as brief as a drop of summer's rain that

evaporates in no time. Writers use similes very frequently because similes help them suggest their meanings.

Some examples of well-known similes:

"My affection hath an unknown bottom, *like the Bay of Portugal.*"

(Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act IV, Scene I)

The analogy between the speaker's wandering and a floating cloud in the following line of Wordsworth's "Daffodils" indicates the aimlessness of the speaker and his dreamy mood:

"I wandered lonely *as a cloud*"

In "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" S. T. Coleridge compares the bride to a rose:

The bride hath paced into the hall,  
Red *as a rose* is she;

The freshness, brightness, fragrance and colour of the rose have been attributed to the bride by the use of this simile. In the same poem, there is a very famous simile:

"Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle *as a painted ship*  
*Upon a painted ocean.*"

The analogy between the Mariner's ship and a painted ship very effectively creates in our minds the dreadful existence of the Mariner in the terribly silent sea.

Similarly effective are the similes in Shelley's "To a Skylark":

"*Like a star of Heaven,*  
In the broad day-light  
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight"

"*Like a Poet hidden*  
In the light of thought"

*"Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace tower"*

*"Like a glow-worm golden  
In a dell of dew"*

*"Like a rose embowered  
In its own green leaves"*

These similes used in successive stanzas of the poem attribute to the skylark the luminescence of the stars, the imagination of poets, the luxurious loneliness of princesses, the radiance of glow-worms and the beauty of roses. They very successfully suggest Shelley's concept of romantic art.

A few more examples:

*"And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook;"*  
(Keats: "To Autumn")

*"What could have made her peaceful with a mind  
That nobleness made simple as a fire,  
With beauty like a tightened bow..."*  
(W. B. Yeats: "No Second Troy")

*"... natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proyning  
by study."* (Bacon: "Of Studies")

*"...distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy  
things."* (Bacon: "Of Studies")

*"The thick blood welled out of him like red velvet, but still he  
did not die."* (Orwell: "The Shooting of an Elephant")

*"I'm as nervous as a mouse."*  
(G. B. Shaw: *Arms and the Man*, Act I)



## Literary Terms

A simile differs from a metaphor in the sense that a metaphor is an implicit comparison while a simile is an explicit comparison. Poets use it for suggestion, clarification and poetic charm. [see *Metaphor*]

### Soliloquy:

A dramatic technique of speaking alone on stage. It is a dramatic technique of exposing to the audience the intentions, thoughts and feelings of a character who speaks to himself while no one remains on stage. For example, four lines of Hamlet's famous soliloquy are quoted below:

To be, or not to be, that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

(Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene I)

A soliloquy is different from an **aside**. Though, both in a soliloquy and an aside only one character speaks, in an aside some other characters remain present on stage but in a soliloquy none remains on stage. A soliloquy is also different from a **dramatic monologue**. The soliloquy is a dramatic technique but a dramatic monologue is a form of poetry in which a single speaker speaks to a silent listener who responds by physical gestures.

### Stanza:

A division of a poem. It is a smaller unit of the structure of a poem. However, in some cases, the stanza is a unit of thought of a poem. There are several stanza patterns. They vary according to their number of lines, length of lines and rhyme schemes. The common English stanza patterns are: Spenserian stanza, quatrain, ottava rima, rhyme royal, terza rima, and tercet.

1) **Spenserian stanza:**

A pattern of stanza consisting of nine verse lines of which the first eight are in iambic pentameter and the ninth is in iambic hexameter. Its rhyme scheme is **ababbcbcc**. This stanza pattern is named after Edmund Spenser who first used it in his *Faerie Queene*. It is generally used for longer poems, which need grace and felicity in rhythm. Many other later poets have also used this pattern. Here is an example from Keats' "The Eve of St. Agnes".

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,	a
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;	b
Uncclasps her warmed jewels one by one;	a
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees	b
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:	b
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,	c
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,	b
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,	c
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.	c

2) **Quatrain:**

A stanza form which consists of four lines. A short poem consisting of four lines is also called quatrain. The rhyme scheme of this stanza form may be **aaba** or **aabb** or **abab** or **abba** or **abcb**. [see *Ballad stanza*]

Examples:

A quatrain in **aaba** rhyme scheme:

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,	a
Before we too into the Dust descend;	a
Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,	b
Sans wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and sans End!	a

(E. Fitzgerald: *Rubaiyat*-24)

This stanza form is also known as "Rubaiyat Stanza" or "Omar Stanza":

A quatrain in *aabb* rhyme scheme:

Come live with me and be my love,	<i>a</i>
And we will all the pleasures prove	<i>a</i>
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields,	<i>b</i>
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.	<i>b</i>

(Marlowe: "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love")

A quatrain in *abab* rhyme scheme:

I wander thro' each charter'd street,	<i>a</i>
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,	<i>b</i>
And mark in every face I meet	<i>a</i>
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.	<i>b</i>

(William Blake: "London")

A quatrain in *abba* rhyme scheme:

Who trusted God was love indeed	<i>a</i>
And love Creation's final law—	<i>b</i>
Though Nature, red in tooth and claw	<i>b</i>
With ravine, shrieked against his creed—	<i>a</i>

(Tennyson: "In Memoriam" - LVI)

### 3) Ballad Stanza:

A stanza consisting of four lines of which the first and third lines are in iambic tetrameter and the second and fourth lines are in iambic trimeter. The rhyme scheme is *abcb*. It is the most common stanza form in English. It is a type of quatrain. Some poets have, however, used this stanza form with variation of the number of lines. Here is an example of a regular ballad stanza:

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,	<i>a</i>
The furrow followed free;	<i>b</i>
We were the first that ever burst	<i>c</i>
Into that silent sea.	<i>b</i>

(S. T. Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner")

4) **Ottava Rima:**

A stanza of eight iambic pentameter lines rhyming *abababcc*. For example:

That is no country for old men. The young	<i>a</i>
In one another's arms, birds in the trees	<i>b</i>
—Those dying generations—at their song,	<i>a</i>
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,	<i>b</i>
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long	<i>a</i>
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.	<i>b</i>
Caught in that sensual music all neglect	<i>c</i>
Monuments of unaging intellect.	<i>c</i>

(W. B. Yeats: "Sailing to Byzantium")

5) **Rhyme Royal:**

A stanza of seven iambic pentameter lines rhyming *ababbcc*. It is also known as *Chaucerian Stanza* as Chaucer was the first to use it. For example:

They flee from me, that sometime did me seek,	<i>a</i>
With naked foot stalking in my chamber.	<i>b</i>
I have seen them, gentle, tame, and meek,	<i>a</i>
That now are wild, and do not remember	<i>b</i>
That sometime they put themselves in danger	<i>b</i>
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,	<i>c</i>
Busily seeking with a continual change.	<i>c</i>

(Thomas Wyatt: "They Flee from Me")

6) **Terza Rima:**

A three-line stanza interlocked with adjoining stanzas according to the formula *aba, bcb, cdc*, and so on. The first twelve lines of each section of Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" are arranged in four terza rima stanzas and the last two lines are a couplet:



O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,	<i>a</i>
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead	<i>b</i>
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,	<i>a</i>
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,	<i>b</i>
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,	<i>c</i>
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed	<i>b</i>
The wiced seeds, where they lie cold an low,	<i>c</i>
Each like a corpse within its grave, until	<i>d</i>
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow	<i>c</i>
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill	<i>d</i>
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)	<i>e</i>
With living hues and odours plain and hill:	<i>d</i>
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;	<i>e</i>
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!	<i>e</i>

### 7) Tercet:

A three-line verse unit in which all lines rhyme either with each other or with the lines of an adjoining tercet.

### Stream of Consciousness:

A narrative technique that relates the continuous flow of thoughts and images in the mental process of a character. It is a mode of narrative that records the nonstop impressions of a conscious mind, without maintaining chronology in time and space. In a conventional narrative method the plot line advances along the time sequence and a coherent structure is build up. But in stream-of-consciousness mode of narrative, the writer follows the flow of a character's thought process in which countless feelings, observations, sensations or reflections pass endlessly, often jumping from one to the other. For this reason, sequence in time and space is ignored and traditional linkers are not used in it. The term was first used by William James in his book, *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). The stream-of-

consciousness has been used, among many others, in James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), William Faulkner's *Sound and the Fury* (1929), and Virginia Woolf's *Waves* (1931). Stream of consciousness is also called "interior monologue".

### Subjectivity:

A mode of expression in which information about the writer's personal life finds place. In this type of writing, the writer's likes and dislikes are given importance. It is opposite to objectivity. For example, in Wordsworth's *Prelude*, one finds that Wordsworth, in his childhood, stole birds, eggs and a boat for childish pleasure. His poems also reveal that he loved nature and believed that God was present in nature. So, Wordsworth was a subjective poet. But Shakespeare was an objective dramatist because he, in his plays, did never directly say what he was, what he liked or what he disliked.

### Symbol:

A thing which stands for something else. It is basically an image which, by virtue of recurrent uses, assumes its special meaning. Thus, a rose stands for beauty, a dove for peace, a V-sign for victory, etc. In *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne "A" is a symbol for adultery.

### Synecdoche:

A figure of speech in which a part stands for the whole or a whole stands for the part. Example:

The **tortoise** here and **elephant** unite,

Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

Here tortoise and elephant (whole) stand for shell and tusk (part) respectively.

"The lone and level sands stretch far away."

(Shelley: "Ozymandias")

In this line "sands" stands for desert.

The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the *deep*  
Moans round with many voices. (Tennyson: "Ulysses")

Here "deep" stands for the sea.

### Theme:

The central idea of a literary work. For example, the major theme of *Pride and Prejudice* is love, of *Othello* jealousy and of *Hamlet* revenge. A work of literature may have several themes. For example, the themes of *Great Expectations* are: a child's growth to be a gentleman, love, power of money, etc.

### Tone:

Tone in literature is the attitude or feeling towards the subject or the target audience. An author creates the intended tone of his writing by the variance of diction, syntax, imagery, figures of speech, etc. Though the author sets the tone in a poem, the attitude of the speaker is called tone; in a novel the attitude of the narrator is called tone; in a non-fiction writing the attitude of the writer is called tone; and in a drama the attitude of a character reflected in his dialogues is called tone.

Tone may be as many as human feelings. It may be formal or informal, serious or playful, romantic or matter-of-fact, cynical or sublime, joyful or melancholic, sympathetic or apathetic, arrogant or humble, ironic or sincere, didactic or objective, and the like. Here is an example from Shelley's "Ozymandias":

My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!

The tone reflected in these lines is arrogant or proud.

Look at these concluding lines of Wordsworth's "Daffodils":

And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

The tone here is sublime and happy.

Hamlet says to Horatio in *Hamlet* (Act I, Scene V):

“There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.”

Here the tone is surprised.

### **Trochee:**

A metrical foot consisting of a stressed and an unstressed syllable in a verse line. It is opposite to iamb. [see *Foot*]

For example:

“Dóublě, / dóublě, / toíl ů and / tróublě”

(Shakespeare: *Macbeth*, Act IV, Scene I)

### **Unities:**

The three rules underlying a dramatic structure. A play follows certain principles about time, place and action which are known as the unity of time, unity of place and unity of action respectively. **The unity of time**, according to Aristotle, is the duration of a play which should be limited within a “single revolution of the sun” or twenty four hours. **The unity of place** means the closeness of the places at which the play takes place. Aristotle suggested that the scenes of a tragedy should be confined to the premises of the palace or to a single small town. It means that a play should not have one scene in London, another in Dhaka and still another in Paris. It should not change its scenes from place to place. **The unity of action** means the logically connected incidents of a play. Aristotle said that the incidents of a play should be connected with each other in such a way that nothing could be taken out of it without harming its wholeness. English dramatists maintained the unity of action but many of them violated the other two unities.



**Wit:**

A brief and brilliant expression intended to produce surprise and pleasure. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare says: "Brevity is the soul of wit." Pope defines it in *An Essay on Criticism* as:

"True wit is Nature to advantage dressed,  
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."

Examples:

"No, some of it is for my child's father."

It is Rosalind's reply to Celia's enquiry about Rosalind's grave mood in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (Act I, Scene III).

Rosalind has already fallen in love at the first sight of Orlando but she does not want to talk about it openly. So, she gives a witty answer suggesting that she is unhappy for her would-be husband.

Here is another example from the same comedy:

No, no Orlando; Men are April when they woo, December  
when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the  
sky changes when they are wives." (Act IV, Scene I)

Donne used witty expressions very efficiently. Here is an example from his poem, "The Sun Rising":

Thy beams, so reverend and strong  
Why shouldst thou think?  
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,

The wit in the last line brilliantly suggests that the sun boasts of its power for nothing because as soon as one closes one's eyelids sunlight cannot hurt one's eyes.

Congreve has profusely used wit in *The Way of the World*. Two examples from Act II of the comedy are quoted below:

"...one's cruelty is one's power, and when one parts with  
one's cruelty, one parts with one's power,"  
"...for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your  
charms—your glass is all cheat."

The characteristic features of wit are brevity, ingenuity, amusement and quickness in effect. In most cases, other figures of speech, especially metaphor, pun and conceit, are used in it to create the desired effect.

Wit is often confused with humour. In fact, it is very difficult to distinguish one from the other. However, wit is something like the flash of lightning, but humour is more like the pleasant sunlight. Wit is malicious and attacking, but humour is compassionate and kind. Wit is intellectual but humour is related to feeling.

Wit has another meaning. In the Neoclassical period writers were called wits.

### **Zeugma:**

A single word (usually a verb or an adjective) that governs or modifies two other words when it is appropriate to one of them. In the sentence, "His *boat* and his dreams sank", the verb "sank" governs both "boat" and "dreams". "Dreams" is not appropriate to the verb "sank", the way "boat" is appropriate to it. "Shattered" would have been an appropriate verb for "dreams". However, the use of zeugma in an expression makes it interesting though grammatically it is confusing. "His boat sank and his dreams shattered", though grammatically correct, is not as interesting as "His boat and his dreams sank". Look at the following lines:

Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,  
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw,  
Or *stain* her honour or her new brocade,  
Forget her prayers, or miss the masquerade,  
Or *lose* her heart, or necklace, at a ball;

(Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*)

The verb, *stain* grammatically controls both "honour" and "brocade" which are different in nature. Similarly, *lose* controls "heart" and "necklace" which are different in nature.

# 2

## Genres

In this Chapter terms related to literary forms are presented according to the broad categories of English literature — POETRY, DRAMA, FICTION AND NON-FICTION. The chart on page 72 gives a primary idea about them.

### POETRY

#### Poetry:

Metrical composition that conveys certain truths. Some famous definitions of poetry are given below:

Poetry is “a speaking picture—with this end, to teach and delight.”

(Sir Philip Sidney: *An Apology for Poetry*)

“Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth.”

(Dr. Samuel Johnson: *The Study of Poetry*)

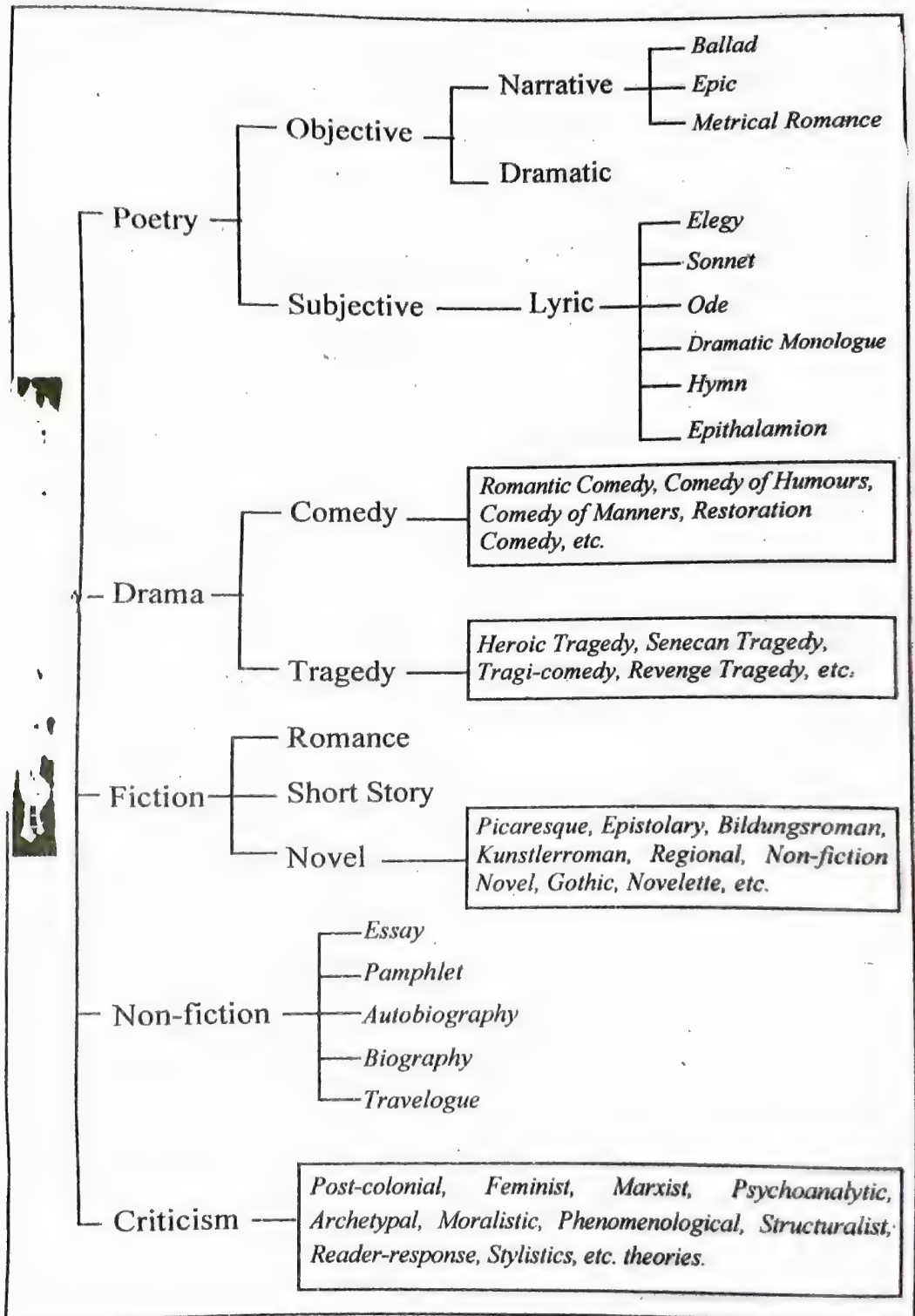
Poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origins from emotion recollected in tranquillity.”

(William Wordsworth: *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*)

“Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds.”

(P. B. Shelley: *A Defence of Poetry*)

## GENRES





Poetry is "a criticism of life."

(Matthew Arnold: *The Study of Poetry*)

"Poetry is emotion put into measure".

(Thomas Hardy: *The Poet*)

"Poetry is a vehicle for morality, truth, and beauty."

(Northrop Frye: *Anatomy of Criticism*)

"Poetry provides the one permissible way of saying one thing and meaning another".

(Robert Frost: *Education by Poetry*)

Poetry is "a kind of ingenious nonsense".

(Isaac Newton: Bent's *Familiar Short Sayings of Great Men*)

Poetry is also called **verse**. It is uncountable; its singular is **poem**. In the Middle Ages, the word *poetry* meant *literature*. Poetry has many varieties.

### **Difference between Prose and Poetry:**

- a) Poetry is composed of metres and rhymes but prose is written with rhetorical devices.
- b) Poetry suggests but prose states.
- c) The basic unit of poetry is the verse-line but the basic unit of prose is the sentence.
- d) Each line of poetry is limited by metres but sentences in prose have no limit of length.
- e) Prose does not provide pleasure the way poetry provides it.

**Lyric:**

A short poem expressing personal or subjective thoughts and intense feelings of a single speaker. It is identical to a song sung with a lyre.

Its main features are:

- 1) It does not tell a story.
- 2) It makes a momentary flash of emotion.
- 3) It expresses personal thoughts and feelings.
- 4) It is shorter than narrative poems—ballad, epic, mock-epic and metrical romance.
- 5) It usually possesses the qualities of a song.
- 6) A single speaker speaks in it.
- 7) Its diction is lucid and soft-sounding.

The sonnet, ode, elegy, dramatic monologue, hymn, epithalamion, etc. are the different forms of the lyric. Shakespeare's sonnets, Keats' odes, Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", Donne's love poems, Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," Arnold's "Dover Beach" and Browning's dramatic monologues are a few examples of the famous English lyric poems.

**Sonnet:**

A lyric poem of fourteen iambic pentameter lines. It is of three types: Petrarchan (also known as *Italian*), Shakespearean (also known as *English*) and Spenserian. The first eight lines of a **Petrarchan sonnet** are called *octave* and the last six lines of it are called *sestet*. The rhyme scheme of the octave of a Petrarchan sonnet is *abba abba* and that of *sestet* is *cd cd cd* or *cde cde*. Milton, Wordsworth, Wyatt, Rossetti and a few other English poets have used Petrarchan form in their sonnets. Here is an example:

The world is too much with us; late and soon,	<i>a</i>	<i>Octave</i>
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;	<i>b</i>	
Little we see in Nature that is ours;	<i>b</i>	
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!	<i>a</i>	
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,	<i>a</i>	
The winds that will be howling at all hours,	<i>b</i>	
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,	<i>b</i>	
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;	<i>a</i>	
It moves us not. —Great God! I'd rather be	<i>c</i>	<i>Sestet</i>
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;	<i>d</i>	
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,	<i>c</i>	
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;	<i>d</i>	
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;	<i>c</i>	
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.	<i>d</i>	

(Wordsworth : "The World Is Too Much with Us")

One more example for the variation in the sestet:

When I consider how my light is spent	<i>a</i>	<i>Octave</i>
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,	<i>b</i>	
And that one talent which is death to hide	<i>b</i>	
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent	<i>a</i>	
To serve therewith my Maker, and present	<i>a</i>	
My true account, lest he returning chide;	<i>b</i>	
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"	<i>b</i>	
I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent	<i>a</i>	
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need	<i>c</i>	<i>Sestet</i>
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best	<i>d</i>	
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state	<i>e</i>	

Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed	<i>c</i>	
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:	<i>d</i>	
They also serve who only stand and wait."	<i>e</i>	

(John Milton)

A **Shakespearean sonnet** is divided into three quatrains followed by a couplet. Its rhyme scheme is *abab cdcd efef gg*. The concluding couplet is often used as a comment on the preceding lines. For example:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?	<i>a</i>	
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:	<i>b</i>	
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,	<i>a</i>	
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:	<i>b</i>	

Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,	<i>c</i>	
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;	<i>d</i>	
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,	<i>c</i>	
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;	<i>d</i>	

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,	<i>e</i>	
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;	<i>f</i>	
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,	<i>e</i>	
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:	<i>f</i>	

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see	<i>g</i>	
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.	<i>g</i>	

(Shakespeare : "Sonnet XVIII")

The **Spenserian sonnet** is named after Edmund Spenser who developed a different rhyme scheme for his sonnets. Like a Shakespearean sonnet, it consists of three quatrains followed by a couplet but its rhyme scheme differs from that of Shakespearean. Its rhyme scheme is *abab bcbc cdcd ee*. For example:



Lyke as a huntsman after weary chace,	<i>a</i>
Seeing the game from him escapt away,	<i>b</i>
Sits downe to rest him in some shady place,	<i>a</i>
With panting hounds beguiled of their pray:	<i>b</i>
So after long pursuit and vaine assay,	<i>b</i>
When I all weary had the chace forsooke,	<i>c</i>
The gentle deare return'd the selfe-same way,	<i>b</i>
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brooke,	<i>c</i>
There she beholding me with mylder looke,	<i>c</i>
Sought not to fly, but fearelesse still did bide:	<i>d</i>
Till I in hand her yet halfe trembling tooke,	<i>c</i>
And with her owne goodwill hir fymely tyde.	<i>d</i>
Strange thing me seem'd to see a beast so-wyld,	<i>e</i>
So goodly wonne with her owne will beguyl'd.	<i>e</i>

(Spenser : *Amoretti*, Sonnet LXVII)

### Ode:

An exalted lyric poem that begins with an address to someone, instil anguish in the middle part and ends with consolation. Its main features are:

- a) It is a kind of lyric poem.
- b) It opens with an address to someone or something.
- c) Its middle part develops a sense of grief.
- d) It ends with some sort of consolation.
- e) It is written in lofty style.
- f) Its subject is serious.
- g) Its tone is grave.

Odes are of three types:

- i) The Pindaric ode or Regular ode
- ii) The Horatian ode and
- iii) The Irregular ode

- i) **The Pindaric ode or Regular ode** is written on the model of the ode of Pindar, a Greek poet. It is divided into sections each of which has three parts: a strophe (the turn), an antistrophe (the counter turn) and an epode (the stand). This type of ode is written on public occasions, for instance, celebration of a national victory, birthdays, state events, etc. For this reason, this kind of ode is also called **Public ode**. Thomas Gray's "The Progress of Poesy" and Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" are examples of the Pindaric ode.
- ii) The **Horatian ode** is named after Horace, a Latin poet. It consists of a number of two-line or four-line stanzas. It is written on private or personal experiences. For this reason, it is also called **Private ode**. The English poets adopted the regular stanza pattern but they discarded Horace's two-line or four-line stanzas. Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty", Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" and Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" are examples of the Horatian ode.
- iii) The odes which neither follow the three-part structure of Pindaric ode nor the regular two-line or four-line stanza pattern of Horatian ode are called **Irregular ode**. Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" is an example of it. The Irregular ode may be both public and private.

### Ballad:

A narrative poem that tells a story through dialogue and action. Its general features are:

1. It is narrative in form, and so, it tells a story.
2. Its narrator is generally impersonal third person.
3. It opens dramatically at the middle of the story.
4. Its story is told in dialogue and action.

5. It is usually narrated in ballad stanzas. [see *Ballad Stanza*]
6. Refrain (repetition of a line or a stanza) is common in it.
7. Traditionally it deals with rural labourers or love or legends or supernatural elements or tragic events.

The ballad is mainly of two types:

- (1) The Folk or Popular ballad; and
- (2) The Literary ballad.

(1) The anonymous ballads composed in the early period when written literature was not developed are called **Folk or Popular ballad**. "The Twa Corbies", "The Demon Lover" and "The Cruel Mother" are examples of the Folk or Popular ballad.

(2) The ballad written on the model of the Popular ballad is known as **Literary ballad**. The poets of this type of ballad imitated the form, language and style of the popular ballad. "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" composed by S.T. Coleridge is a famous Literary ballad. Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel" are also examples of the literary ballad.

**Note:** Though four-line ballad stanzas are usually used in ballads, there may be exceptions as in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". In it there are several stanzas consisting of five or more lines. Similarly, though third-person narrator is traditionally used in ballads, first-person narrator may also be used as in Wordsworth's "We are Seven".

### Elegy:

A lyric poem mourning for the death of an individual or lamenting over a tragic event.

The main characteristics of the elegy are:

- 1) It opens with lamentation for the death of the speaker's dear friend.
- 2) In its middle part the speaker idealizes and admires the dead.
- 3) The society is criticized for doing injustice to the dead and for not allowing the dead person to do what he could have done.
- 4) The speaker feels the presence of the dead friend around him.
- 5) It raises serious spiritual questions about the nature of life and death, and about the immortality of the soul.
- 6) In its closing part the speaker finds consolation and solace.
- 7) It is about a single dead person. However, Gray's mourning for all the dead villagers in "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" is an exception.
- 8) It is meditative in nature.
- 9) Its tone is grave.

Some of the famous English elegies are: Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", Tennyson's "In Memoriam", Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" and W. H. Auden's "In Memory of W. B. Yeats".

### **Pastoral Elegy:**

An elegy which begins with an invocation to the Muses and describes a procession of shepherds who mourn for the misfortune of a fellow shepherd in a pastoral atmosphere. In this kind of elegy nature also takes part in the mourning. Its structure, meditative nature and grave tone are similar to those of the elegy. Edmund Spenser's famous poem, "The Shepherd's Calendar", Milton's "Lycidas", Shelley's "Adonais" and Arnold's "Thyrsis" are famous pastoral elegies.



**Epic:**

A long narrative poem that tells in grand style the history and aspirations of a national hero. The major elements of an epic are:

- 1) Invocation to the Muses and proposition of the subject at the beginning;
- 2) Lofty language and high style;
- 3) A central hero of superman quality;
- 4) A subject of national or collective interest;
- 5) A long perilous journey, often on water;
- 6) Long speeches of the heroic leaders;
- 7) Mighty battles;
- 8) Feasts and revels;
- 9) Homeric (long-run) similes;
- 10) Involvement of supernatural elements (also known as machinery);
- 11) An underworld journey;
- 12) Assembly of the supernatural powers;
- 13) Glorification of justice and peace;

There are two types of epic:

- (1) Primary or Oral epic; and
- (2) Secondary or Literary epic;

A **Primary epic** is a type of epic with which the epic tradition began. The **Secondary or Literary epic** is the one which imitated the tradition of the primary epic. In a primary epic the episodes taken from the oral tradition are linked with one another to make a longer story. For this reason, looseness in the construction is apparent. In a secondary epic such looseness is not found. A primary epic displays savage and rude heroism but a secondary epic shows a more refined taste. In a primary epic supernatural elements are very significant but in a literary epic they are not so significant.

Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are primary epics. Virgil's *Aeneid*, Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* are secondary epics.

### **Mock-epic:**

A narrative poem which aims at mockery and laughter by using almost all the characteristic features of an epic but for a trivial subject. Pope's well-known poem, *The Rape of the Lock* is a famous mock-epic. It has in it invocation, proposition of the subject, battles, supernatural machinery, journey on water, underworld journey, long speeches, feasts (coffee house), Homeric similes and grand style but all for a simple family dispute instead of a dignified subject. The grand treatment of a low subject produces hilarious laughter and makes the story ridiculous.

### **Metrical Romance:**

A romance in verse. [see *Romance*]

### **Doggerel:**

A lower kind of poem on a trivial subject having rough and monotonous rhyme.

### **Nonsense Verse:**

A kind of metrical composition that does not follow thematic rules and rules of rhyme. Here is a real nonsense verse:

Ah, ra, chickera,  
Roly, poly, pickena,  
Kinny, minny, festi,  
Shanti-poo,  
Ickerman, chikerman, Chinee-choo.

**Dramatic Monologue:**

A kind of lyric poem in which a single speaker expresses his thoughts and feelings to a silent listener. Its common features are:

- a) A single speaker speaks throughout the poem on some specific issue.
- b) The speaker speaks to someone who remains silent throughout the poem. The listener's presence is revealed through the speaker's comment.
- c) It concentrates on the speaker and reveals his character and mindset.
- d) It begins dramatically and takes several abrupt turns in the course of its progress.
- e) It is not a dramatic technique, and therefore, it is not used in the drama. It is a form of lyric poem.

Robert Browning is well-known for his dramatic monologues. His "My Last Duchess," "Andrea del Sarto" and "Fra Lippo Lippi," and Tennyson's "Ulysses" and "Tithonus," are some of the best known dramatic monologues.

**Interior Monologue:**

A kind of dramatic monologue in which the speaker dramatizes inner conflicts, self-analysis, and talks to his imagined split self. His thoughts wander backward and forward revealing his character. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot is an example.

**Note:** The term "interior monologue" does not only refer to a type of poem but also refers to a narrative technique, similar to *stream of consciousness*, which is used in fiction. [see *Stream of Consciousness*]

**Metaphysical Poetry:**

"Meta" means *beyond* and "physical" means *about concrete things* that one can see and touch. Thus, metaphysical poetry means poems on the subjects which exist beyond the physical world. In other words,

it is a type of poetry which deals with abstract or philosophical subjects. Metaphysical poetry has the following features:

- (1) Abstract themes—either love between man and woman or devotion to God;
- (2) Logical and argumentative presentation of emotion;
- (3) Use of conceit and wit in profusion;
- (4) Terseness of expression;
- (5) Skilful use of colloquial words instead of formal words;
- (6) Abrupt beginning.

Donne, Marvell, Herbert, Vaughan, Cowley, Carew and Crashaw wrote metaphysical poems. They are known as metaphysical poets.

### Carpe Diem:

A literary motif used in lyric poems. It is a Latin phrase which means “seize the day” or “enjoy the present moment”. The poem that deals with this motif is called a poem of *carpe diem* tradition. Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress”, and Robert Herrick’s “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time” are common examples of this type of poems.

### Villanelle:

A kind of poem consisting of five three-line stanzas and a final quatrain. The rhyme scheme of each of the three-line stanzas is *aba* and of the final four-line stanza is *abaa*. The first line and the third line of the first stanza are repeated alternately at the third line of the following stanzas and at the end of the quatrain both are repeated. Dylan Thomas’s “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” is an example:

Do not go gentle into that good night,	a
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;	b
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.	a
Though wise men at their end know dark is right,	a
Because their words had forked no lightning they	b
Do not go gentle into that good night.	a



Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright	<i>a</i>
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,	<i>b</i>
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.	<i>a</i>
Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,	<i>a</i>
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,	<i>b</i>
Do not go gentle into that good night.	<i>a</i>
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight	<i>a</i>
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,	<i>b</i>
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.	<i>a</i>
And you, my father, there on the sad height,	<i>a</i>
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.	<i>b</i>
Do not go gentle into that good night.	<i>a</i>
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.	<i>a</i>

### Epithalamion:

A kind of lyric poem written to celebrate a wedding. It is a Spenser's "Epithalamion" which he wrote to celebrate his own marriage, is the best example of it. John Donne's "Hail Bishop Valentine, whose day this is", composed on the marriage of Lady Elizabeth and Count Palatine, Ben Jonson's "Up Youthes and Virgins, up, and praise" composed on the wedding of John Lord Ramsey and Lady Elizabeth Radcliffe, Robert Herrick's "Bloom'd from the East, or faire Injewel'd May" composed on the wedding of Sir Clipsey Crew and his Lady, W. H. Auden's "Epithalamion" commemorating the marriage of Giuseppe Antonio Borgese and Elisabeth Mann, are the famous epithalamia.

### Hymn:

A lyric poem or song in praise of God or a deity or a hero. Usually, it is sung by chorus to express religious emotion. Spenser's "Fowre Hymnes", Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God", Shelley's "Hymn of Apollo" and Keats' "Hymn to Apollo" are some of the well-known hymns in English.

**Requiem:**

A musical composition for the mass (a kind of funeral prayer) of a dead person. It has religious fervour. Mozart was a famous composer of requiems. William Croft, Thomas Morley, Thomas Tomkins, Christopher Wood are some of the many English requiem composers.

**Lampoon**

A bitter satire in prose or verse that ridicules and attacks a person or a group.

**DRAMA****Drama:**

A literary form intended to be performed on stage through action and dialogues.

The elements that make a drama are:

- 1) A story;
- 2) Enactment on stage through action (physical movements) and dialogues;
- 3) Collaborative performance of the characters for the production; (However, monodrama is produced by only one character)
- 4) Meant for a collective reception of an audience;
- 5) A plot comprising a beginning or exposition, middle or climax and end or denouement; (see *Exposition*, *Climax* and *Denouement*)
- 6) Conflict of one or the other kind;
- 7) Prose or verse or a mixture of them is its medium.

It is also called "play". The theatrical performance is called drama; the text (or script) is also called drama.

Basically it is of two types: COMEDY and TRAGEDY

## COMEDY

### Comedy:

A kind of drama which begins with adversity or discord but ends in happiness. Its aim is to correct the follies and frivolities of the individuals of a particular society through laughter and ridicule. Its main features are:

- 1) Its primary purpose is to amuse the audience.
- 2) It exposes follies and ridicules vices.
- 3) Its action moves from disorder to order.
- 4) Its tone is generally playful.
- 5) Its plot presents conflict of some kind.

Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and Bernard Shaw are among the best known comedy writers. Comedies are of various types: romantic comedy, comedy of humours, comedy of manners, Restoration comedy, burlesque, farce, black-comedy, high comedy, low comedy, comedy of ideas, etc. A few of them are discussed here:

### Romantic Comedy:

A form of comedy which deals with love, often love at first sight, as its main theme. It starts with some problems that make the union of the lovers difficult. However, the problems are finally solved and the play ends with the lovers' happy union. Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is a romantic comedy.

### Comedy of Humours:

A comedy in which characters behave according to their respective humours (temperaments) — choleric, melancholic, sanguine, and phlegmatic. Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* and *Every Man out of His Humour* are two famous comedies of this type. [see *Humours*]

**Tragi-comedy:**

A kind of play in which tragic and comic scenes are mingled. It violates the classical rules of pure tragedy or pure comedy on the logic that human life is neither absolutely sad nor absolutely happy. According to the classical theory of drama, grand themes and upper class characters are appropriate to tragedy; low subjects and low people are fit for comedy. A typical tragedy needs a serious plot which usually results in death. Quite contrary to it, a typical comedy needs a commonplace love story which ends in happiness. But there are plays in which low and high characters act together, common and serious events happen alternately or tragic and comic events are intermingled. Such a play is called tragi-comedy. Often quoted examples of the tragi-comedy are Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline* and *Tempest*.

**Heroic Tragedy:**

A kind of drama written in grand and lofty style to show a disastrous end of a conflict between love and honour or love and duty. It developed in England during Restoration period. John Dryden is the pioneer of this kind of tragedy.

Its features are:

- a) It is composed in heroic couplets.
- b) Its subject is about national foundations, mythological events, or grand issues.
- c) Its hero is powerful, decisive, and domineering even when he is wrong.
- d) It attempts to present epic grandeur in dramatic form.

*The Indian Emperor*, *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards* and *All for Love* written by Dryden and *The Black Prince* written by Roger Boyle are good examples of heroic tragedy.



**Revenge Tragedy:**

Revenge tragedy is a kind of tragedy that presents a quest for vengeance and results in bloodshed and mutilation. It is modelled on the Senecan tragedy. It was popular in England during the late 16th and 17th centuries with the Elizabethans and Jacobeans. The essential elements of this kind of tragedy are:

- 1) Its plot is about a secret murder, usually of a benevolent ruler.
- 2) The ghost of the murdered person visits younger kinsman and reveals the truth.
- 3) The younger kinsman, usually a son, starts a quest for revenge.
- 4) The story involves disguise, intrigue, insanity, incest, adultery, rape, infanticide, suicide and gruesome murders on the stage.
- 5) Its typical characters are: a ghost, a cruel tyrant, a faithful male servant, a reliable female, etc.
- 6) It aims at exploring corruption in court, evil of absolute power and court intrigues.
- 7) Its highly rhetorical style is marked by the use of epigram, stichomythia (sharp dialogues), hyperboles, etc.
- 8) Its action is markedly sensational.
- 9) It uses philosophical soliloquies.

Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are famous revenge tragedies. Revenge tragedy and Senecan tragedy are famous almost similar only with the difference that revenge tragedy allows murders on the stage while Senecan tragedy reports off-stage murders.

**Melodrama:**

A kind of drama that provides sensational entertainment. It impersonates disproportionate virtue or extreme evil and presents horror and bloodshed, thrills and violence, witches and vampires on the stage. Examples of this type are Douglas Jerrold's *Black-Ey'd*

*Susan*, Boucicault's *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*, etc. Plays and novels may contain melodramatic elements even if they are not pure melodrama.

## OTHER FORMS OF DRAMA

### **Monodrama:**

A play with a single character. In this kind of play only one character enacts the drama on the stage.

### **Closet Drama (also called Dramatic Poem):**

A kind of play for reading, not for performing on stage. Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Thomas Hardy's *Dynasts* are examples of closet drama.

### **Interlude:**

A short entertaining play of the Middle Ages. It was staged between the Acts of a longer play or between the courses of a feast.

### **Morality Play:**

A medieval dramatic form which allegorically presents an ideal Christian life on stage.

### **Miracle Play:**

A kind of medieval play which deals with the miraculous events of the life of a saint.

### **Mysterious Play:**

A medieval form of play which is based on the Biblical stories.

### **The Theatre of the Absurd:**

A literary movement in Europe between 1940 and 1989. It encouraged a new kind of plays on the theme of the *Absurd* or

meaninglessness of life. These plays reflect Albert Camus' philosophy of *the Absurd* which he introduced in his essay, "The Myth of Sisyphus" (Le Mythe de Sisyphe, 1942). Camus argues in the essay that man's quest for understanding the meaning of life results in futility. He compares human existence with that of Sisyphus who, in Greek Mythology, was given an eternal punishment of rolling a large stone up a hill only to see it roll down to the bottom. [see *The Myth of Sisyphus*]

#### Main Characteristics:

- a) It focuses on human conditions according to "existential" philosophy.
- b) It has no plot structure in traditional sense; whatever it has as plot is illogical, often arbitrary and lacks Aristotelian wholeness.
- c) Its plot is both comic and tragic—two aspects of the same situation.
- d) Nothingness, absence and unresolved mysteries are its main themes.
- e) Here characters make abortive attempts to search for the meaning of life and death and the existence of God. They range from clowns to realistic figures.
- f) Here time often moves spirally, instead of its usual linear movement.
- g) Its dialogues are fragmented, repetitive and often nonsensical.
- h) Pauses are frequently used in it to intensify tension.
- i) It presents no resolution at the end. It leaves the audience to "draw his own conclusions, make his own errors".

Jean Genet's *The Maid* (1954), Eugene Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano* (1950), Arthur Adamov's *Ping-Pong* (1955), Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1954) and *Endgame* (1958), Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Caretaker* (1959) and Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* (1959) are the well-known absurdist plays.

## FICTION

### Fiction:

Fictitious narratives in prose. It may be based on facts but narrated with the colour of imagination. It is different from factual reports. All novels and short stories fall under this genre. Fables, parables, fairy tales and folklore are not called fiction though there are fictional elements in each of them.

### Novel:

A fictitious prose narrative of a certain length (50,000 and above words). A novel tells an imaginary story about recognizable characters and their actions. In other words, the people and events in traditional novels are imitation of real human society. The common elements found in a conventional novel are:

- 1) A fictitious story, often a fictitious love story;
- 2) A plot (arrangement of the incidents according to the logic of cause and effect);
- 3) Suspense or curiosity to know what happens next;
- 4) Credible characters (some common human beings, not supernatural or superhuman beings);
- 5) Setting in a place where the incidents of the story take place;
- 6) Setting in time that changes with the progress of the story;
- 7) A point of view or the voice of the narrator;
- 8) Longer than short stories and usually shorter than romances;
- 9) An illusion of a realistic society;
- 10) A world vision;

A novel may be tragic or comic. It may be general or regional. It may be psychological or social. A novel may also be a picaresque novel or a gothic novel or an epistolary novel or a non-fiction novel or a novelette and the like.



**Picaresque Novel:**

A novel that tells the story of a rascal or knave who moves from place to place for adventures and fights his evil antagonists. It is realistic in manner and satiric in aim. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605) and Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* are famous examples.

**Bildungsroman:**

A kind of novel that focuses on the protagonist's growth from childhood to adulthood, and then to maturity. It traces the protagonist's quest for identity through psychological and moral crises. It is also called **formation novel** or **education novel**. The well-known examples of this kind of novel are: Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*; George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss*.

**Kunstlerroman:**

A kind of novel that portrays the growth of a novelist or any other kind of artist from a naïve stage to maturity. James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Youngman* is an example of this kind of novel.

**Gothic Novel:**

A form of prose narrative which comprises a medieval setting, wild and horrific incidents and mysterious occurrences. Clara Reeve's *Old English Baron* is an example. Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and Dickens' *Great Expectations* have gothic elements.

**Epistolary Novel:**

A novel in the form of letters. The narrative of this type of novel is carried forward by letters written by one or more of the characters of that novel. Richardson's *Pamela* is an example.

**Regional Novel:**

A novel that depicts in its plot the customs, dialects and ways of life of a specific rural region. A novelist who writes regional novels

chooses a particular fictional region for the settings of all of his novels. For examples R. K. Narayan's novels are set in "Malgudi", Thomas Hardy's novels are set in "Wessex" and William Faulkner's novels are located in "Yaknapatawpha County".

### **Non-fiction Novel:**

A novel based on real characters and events. It is journalistic in tone and lacks the touches of imagination generally found in other types of novels. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* is an example.

### **Novelette:**

A short novel usually of thirty to forty thousand words. It is shorter than a novel but longer than a short story. *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* are best examples of this genre.

## **Short Story**

A short fictional narrative in prose (of about six to ten thousand words) that can be read in one sitting. It starts abruptly, rises to a climax and ends suddenly with a sense of incompleteness. The incident in it is invented instead of being an account of an event that actually happened. Short stories are also called **short-fiction**.

Elements of a short story:

1. Fictional narrative in prose;
2. Short in length (can be read in one sitting);
3. A single setting;
4. A single plot aiming at a single effect;
5. A central character; there may be a few supporting characters;
6. A single theme;
7. Covers a short period of time;
8. Begins suddenly;
9. Ends with a powerful suggestion;

Maugham's "Luncheon" and O' Henry's "Gift of the Magi" exemplify all these features. Among the short story writers, Guy de Maupassant, Rudyard Kipling, D. H. Lawrence, Charles Dickens, George Orwell, O' Henry (William Sydney Porter), James Joyce, Catherine Mansfield, Herman Melville, Saki (H. H. Munro), Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens), Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allen Poe are well-known.

**Anecdote:**

A short account of an incident usually used within a narrative to illustrate a point or highlight a truth. It is used as a digression from the main story. An anecdote may be historical or biographical or fictional.

**NON-FICTION****Essay:**

A short composition in prose which analyses a subject often to make a view point for general people. It differs from a short story because a short story is fictitious while an essay is an analytical presentation of something real. Examples: Orwell's "Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool"; Bertrand Russell's "Future of Mankind", etc.

**Pamphlet:**

An argumentative writing in prose on a controversial issue of a particular time. It is written to favour a side of the controversy and suggest a solution. Milton's *Areopagitica* is an example of it.

**OTHERS****Fable:**

A very short, allegorical story of animal characters which teaches a moral for human beings. Aesop's fables are best examples. Here is one:

### The Greedy Dog

A greedy dog went into a butcher's shop and stole a big juicy bone. He ran away so fast that the butcher could not catch him. He ran out into the fields with the bone. He was going to eat it all by himself. He came to a stream. There was a narrow bridge across it. The dog walked on to the bridge, and looked into the water. He could see his own shadow in the water. He thought it was another dog with a big bone in his mouth.

The greedy dog thought the bone in the water was much bigger than the one he had stolen from the butcher.

The greedy dog dropped the bone from his mouth. It fell into the water and was lost. He jumped into the water to snatch the bigger bone from the other dog.

The greedy dog jumped into the water with a high splash. He looked everywhere but he could not see the other dog. His shadow had gone.

The silly dog went home hungry. He lost the bone and got nothing because he had been greedy.

### Parable:

A parable is an allegorical story of human characters which teaches a religious moral. There are several famous parables in the *Bible*. Here is one:

'The kingdom of Heaven is like this. There was once a landowner who went out early one morning to hire labourers for his vineyard; and after agreeing to pay them the usual day's wage he sent them off to work. Going out three hours later he saw some more men standing idle in the market-place. "Go and join the other in the vineyard," he said, "and I will pay you a fair wage"; so off they went. At midday he went out again, and at three in the afternoon, and made the same arrangement as before. An hour before sunset he went out and found another group standing there; so he said to them, "Why are you standing about like this all day with nothing to do?" "Because no one has hired us", they replied; so he told them, "Go and join the others in the vineyard". When evening fell, the owner of the vineyard said



to his steward, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with those who came last and ending with the first." Those who had started work an hour before sunset came forward, and were paid the full day's wage. When it was the turn of the men who had but come first, they expected something extra, were paid the same amount as the others. As they took it, they grumbled at their employer: "These late-comers have done only one hour's work, yet you have put them on a level with us, who have sweated the whole day long in the blazing sun!" The owner turned to one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unfair to you. You agreed on the usual wage for the day, did you not? Take your pay and go home. I choose to pay the last man the same as you. Surely I am free to do what I like with my own money. Why be jealous because I am kind?" Thus will the last be first, and the first last.' (Matthew: 20)

This parable teaches God's supremacy and His ways to man.

### **Romance:**

A form of medieval narrative in which a brave and chivalric knight moves from place to place in search of extravagant adventures and finally wins the favour of a courtly lady. It may be in verse or in prose. Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d' Arthur* is a famous romance in prose. *Sir Gawain and the Greek Knight* by an anonymous writer is a romance in verse.

### **Satire:**

A literary attack on the follies and vices of an individual or a society with a view to correcting them through laughter and ridicule. It may be in prose or in verse. It is of two kinds: formal (direct) and informal (indirect). A **formal or direct satire** is one which is not mixed with other genres. It may again be of two types: *Horatian* and *Juvenalian*. The mild and sophisticated literary attacks are **Horatian satire** and the severe, indignant attacks are **Juvenalian satire**.

An **indirect or informal satire** is presented in the form of another genre. It may be presented in the form of an allegory as Dryden's

*Absalom and Achitophel* which is known as satiric allegory. It may be satiric epic (or mock-epic) as Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. Thus, it may be satiric comedy as Ben Jonson's *Volpone* and *Alchemist*; satiric travelogue as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; satiric novel as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*; satiric verse as Eliot's *Waste Land* and satiric essay as Addison's essays.

### **Allegory:**

A literary form in which one story is told in the guise of another story. In other words, an allegory is a story of double meanings. Its author comments upon some persons or events of his age under disguised names. It may be both in prose and in verse. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is a well known allegory in prose which deals with Christian notion of a soul's salvation. Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* is a political allegory in verse that uses names of Biblical personages and events to mean the political situation of his time.

### **Legend:**

A story about a semi-god human figure. In it the writer focuses on the greatness of a human being though some supernatural beings may be involved in it. Beowulf, King Arthur, Faust and Robin Hood are the great legendary figures.

### **Myth:**

An ancient story about gods and goddesses and their mysterious activities. In myths there may be human characters but the main characters must be supernatural beings.

### **Mythology:**

Myths are collectively called mythology. The Greek mythology, the Roman mythology, the Egyptian mythology and the Indian mythology are well-known.

# 3

## History of English Literature

The history of English literature is very closely related to the history of the English people. It began with the emergence of the English nation and kept on evolving along with the social development of the nation. In the history of this nation there had been several religious and political changes. Scientific discoveries and inventions also changed the mode of life from time to time. All these historical changes brought about significant changes in literature. So, in the history of English literature there were different phases of progress. Each of those phases, known as **Age** or **Period**, has been given a particular name, sometimes after the name of the king or queen, sometimes after the name of a great writer, and sometimes according to the spirit of the time. Some of the ages have got more than one name because different historians have given them different names. Similarly the duration of a particular age also differs according to the choice of the historians. Apart from these, some of the ages are subdivided into smaller ages. Though the names and time-span of the ages of English literature differ from historian to historian the following list derived from M. H. Abrams is dependable:

1. **450-1066: The Old English Period or The Anglo-Saxon Period**
2. **1066-1500: The Middle English Period**
  - a) The Anglo-Norman Period (1066-1340)
  - b) The Age of Chaucer (1340-1400)

**3. 1500-1660: The Renaissance Period**

- a) Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)
- b) Jacobean Age (1603-1625)
- c) Caroline Age (1625-1649)
- d) Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)

**4. 1660-1785: The Neoclassical Period**

- a) The Restoration Period (1660-1700)
- b) The Augustan Age or The Age of Pope (1700-1745)
- c) The Age of Sensibility or The Age of Johnson (1745-1785)

**5. 1798-1832: The Romantic Period****6. 1832-1901: The Victorian Period**

- i) The Pre-Raphaelites (1848-1860)
- ii) Aestheticism and Decadence (1880-1901)

**7. 1901-1939: The Modern Period**

- i) The Edwardian Period (1901-1910)
- ii) The Georgian Period (1910-1936)

**8. 1939 . . . : The Post-modern Period****1. The Old English Period**

OR

**The Anglo-Saxon Period (450-1066)**

This age started in the fifth century when the Jutes, Angles and Saxons came to England from Germany, defeated the English tribes and started their reign. It ended in 1066 with the Norman Conquest.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) Christianization of the pagan tribes began in England.
- (2) In the 7th century Christian authorities established monasteries where written literature began. Whatever had existed as literature before that time was oral.



- (3) Alfred the Great who reigned over England from 871 to 901 encouraged education and supervised the compilation of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*.

### Major Literary Works of the Period:

*Beowulf*, the **earliest epic in English**, was written in this period. "The Wanderer", "The Seafarer", "The Husband's Message" and "The Wife's Lament" are among the remarkable literary works of the age. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* written in this age is the **earliest prose** of English literature.

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Most of the literary works are anonymous.
- 2) Paganism dominates the literary spirit of the time though Christianity is also traceable.
- 3) Strong belief in Fate is reflected.
- 4) Evil is symbolized by monsters.
- 5) Romantic love is absent.
- 6) Attitude to women is respectful.
- 7) Sea adventures, savagery and heroic activities are honoured.
- 8) Use of more metaphors and less similes is the practice of the time.
- 9) Alliteration is used as the chief ornamental device and all alliterative syllables are stressed.
- 10) Kennings (compound words instead of single words) are widely used. Here are some examples: "whale-road" for *sea*, "loaf-giver" for *king*, "life-house" for *body*, "soul-destroyer" for *monster*, etc.
- 11) Verse lines do not have equal number of syllables. Syllables in one line vary from six to fourteen.
- 12) End-rhyme is ignored.

## 2. The Middle English Period (1066-1500)

This period started with the Norman Conquest in 1066 and ended at the close of the fifteenth century. There are two shorter ages within this period. The time from 1066 to 1340 is called **Anglo-Norman Period** because the literature of that period was written mainly in Anglo-Norman, the French dialect, spoken by the new ruling class of England. The period from 1340 to 1400 is called the **Age of Chaucer** because Chaucer, the great poet, dominated this period. The time from 1066 to 1500 is called *The Middle Ages*. The early part of the Middle Ages is called the **Dark Ages** because what actually happened during that time can hardly be known.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) The English parliament was established in 1295.
- (2) Crusade, the religious battle between Muslims and Christians, took place in between 11th and 13th century.
- (3) Magna Carta, the great charter which limited the power of the monarchs was passed on 15th June, 1215.
- (4) In 1362 English was declared to be the language of law and courts.
- (5) The Feudal System, which had been very strong earlier, collapsed after the **Black Death**, a plague in 1348-49.
- (6) In the fourteenth century Reformation of English Church began under the leadership of John Wycliffe.
- (7) William Caxton established printing press in 1476.
- (8) Renaissance began with the fall of the then Constantinople in 1453. Mohammad II, the Sultan of the Ottoman Turks and a crusader, defeated the Christians in 1453 and occupied Constantinople, the then capital of the Byzantine Empire and the centre of classical learning. After the defeat the Christian scholars fled to different parts of Europe where they spread their knowledge. Thus, ancient learning started reviving. This revival of the classical knowledge is called **renaissance**. Its features are: curiosity about the

unknown, patriotism, desire for unlimited wealth and power, love of adventures, admiration for beauty, care for humanism and fondness for the past.

- (9) Columbus discovered America in 1492 and Vasco da Gama reached India in 1498.
- (10) During this period Copernicus (1473-1543) proved that the sun is the centre of all planets.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

John Wycliffe (1324-84):

- \* He is called the **father of English prose**.

*The Bible* (translated into English from Latin)

John Gower (1325-1408):

*Confessio Amantis*

Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400):

*Troilus and Criseyde* (1387)

*Canterbury Tales* (1385-1400)

William Langland (1332-1386):

"Piers Plowman" (1362)

Sir Thomas Malory:

*Morte d' Arthur* (1485), the first romance in prose

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Poetry serves as the main genre.
- 2) Prose in English gets a strong foundation.
- 3) The English language reaches a considerable standard though old spelling continues.
- 4) Drama began in the form of "Mystery Play," "Morality Play" and "Interlude".
- 5) The writers of the age are influenced by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio.
- 6) Love, chivalry and religion are the three main literary subjects of this period.

- 7) The spirit of romance dominates the age.
- 8) Use of pentameter (ten syllables in each line) begins.
- 9) End-rhyme is introduced.
- 10) Stressed alliteration is discarded and humour, irony and satire are brought into practice.

### **3. The Renaissance Period (1500-1660)**

Though renaissance began in 1453, its effect on English life and literature was felt after 1500. For this reason, it is generally accepted that the Renaissance Period began with the beginning of the 16th century and continued till the Restoration in 1660. This period is called the Renaissance Period because renaissance spirit was the main driving force that characterized the literature of this time. This period of 160 years is subdivided into four shorter ages after the names of the political rulers:

- (a) Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)
- (b) Jacobean Age (1603-1625)
- (c) Caroline Age (1625-1649)
- (d) Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)

#### **(a) Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)**

This age is named after Queen Elizabeth I who reigned over England from 1558 to 1603. This is called the **Golden Age** of English literature.

The Important Facts Which Influenced the Literature of This Period:

- 1) With the accession of Queen Elizabeth I, dynastic problems and political troubles came to an end. Religious and social stability brought about national prosperity.
- 2) The religious Reformation inspired religious tolerance and secularism.



- 3) Elizabeth I introduced Anglicanism to settle religious problems. It has a long history. In the 16th century Martin Luther of Germany and Zwingli and Calvin of Switzerland protested against the autocracy of the then Pope. Those who supported them were called Protestants and those who still supported the Pope were called the papists or Catholics. Henry VIII who was the King of England during those years supported Protestantism for his personal advantage. He wanted to divorce his first wife, Catherine, and marry Anne Boleyn, his fiancée, but the Pope did not approve it. So he denied Pope's authority, married Anne Boleyn and introduced Protestantism to England. Some of the people accepted King's religious authority but the rest followed the Pope's rule. This caused a bloody civil war which continued till 1558, the year Queen Elizabeth I came to power. She understood the problem and introduced Anglicanism, England's own church. This religious settlement brought stability and prosperity to England in the second half of the 16th century.
- 4) Geographical and astronomical discoveries of the previous decades brought unlimited fortune during this period.
- 5) Renaissance that had started earlier was now very strongly felt in England. It brought ancient Greek and Roman wisdom to England. Erasmus reached England, and with John Colet, taught humanism and other ideals of renaissance.
- 6) The social life of England was marked with a strong national spirit, humanism, liberal religious views, scientific curiosity, social content, intellectual progress and unlimited enthusiasm.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Thomas More (1478-1535):

*Utopia* (or *Kingdom of Nowhere*). The book was originally written in Latin in 1516

Norton (1532-84) and Sackville (1536-1608):

*Gorboduc* (1562), the first English tragedy

Edmund Spenser (1552-99):

- \* He is called the **poet of the poets** because many later English poets followed his art of poetry.

*The Faerie Queene* (1590)

*The Shepherd's Calendar* (1579)

Nicholas Udall:

*Ralph Roister Doister* (1553), the **first English Comedy**

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86):

"An Apology for Poetry" (1595), a critical treatise.

*Arcadia* (1590), a book that bears the embryo of English novel

John Lyly (1554-1606):

- \* He is called a **university wit**.

*Campaspe* (1584)

*Sapho and Phao* (1584)

*Midas* (1589)

*Euphues* (1579), a book that bears the embryo of English novel

Thomas Kyd (1557-1595):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*The Spanish Tragedy* (1585)

Robert Greene (1558-92):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589)

*James- IV* (1591)

George Peele (1558-98):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*David and Bethsabe* (1599)

*Arraignement of Paris* (1584)

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\* **University wits** are a group of young dramatists who wrote and performed in London towards the end of the 16th century. They are called university wits because they were the witty students of Cambridge or Oxford. Marlowe, Kyd, Nashe, Greene, Lyly, Lodge and Peele were the members of this group. They upheld the classical ideals, and ridiculed the crudeness of the new English plays.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626):

- \* He is called **natural philosopher**.

*Essays* (1597)

Christopher Marlowe (1564-93):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*Tamburlaine the Great* Part I & II (1587-88)

*The Jew of Malta* (1589)

*Edward II* (1591)

*Doctor Faustus* (1592)

William Shakespeare (1564-1616):

- \* **The greatest English dramatist**, famous for the objective presentation of his deep knowledge about human psychology. He is often called the **bard of Avon**. He wrote 37 plays and 154 sonnets. Of the total 37 plays he wrote the following 25 before the death of Queen Elizabeth I:

*Henry VI* (1st. Part 1591-92)

*Henry VI* (2nd. Part 1591-92)

*Henry VI* (3rd. Part 1591-92)

*Richard III* (1593)

*The Comedy of Errors* (1593)

*Titus Andronicus* (1594)

*The Taming of the Shrew* (1594)

*Love's Labour's Lost* (1594)

*Romeo and Juliet* (1594)

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595)

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1595)

*King John* (1595)

*Richard II* (1596)

*The Merchant of Venice* (1596)

*Henry IV* (1st. Part. 1597)

*Henry IV* (2nd. Part. 1598)

*Much Ado about Nothing* (1598)

*Henry V* (1599)

*Julius Caesar* (1599)

*The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600)  
*As You Like It* (1600)  
*Hamlet* (1601)  
*Twelfth Night* (1601)  
*Troilus and Cressida* (1602)  
*All's Well That Ends Well* (1602)

Thomas Nashe (1567-1601):

★ He is also called a **university wit**.

*The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594)

Ben Jonson (1573-1637):

★ A **neo-classicist** though he wrote in the time when romantic mode of literature was prevalent. He is called a neo-classicist because he followed the classical rules of drama:

*Every Man out of His Humour* (1600)

*Every Man in His Humour* (1601)

Beaumont (1584-1616) and Fletcher (1579-1625):

*Philaster* (1611)

*A King and No King* (1611)

*The Maid's Tragedy* (1610)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Elizabethan literature reflects a great variety of creative genius.
- 2) It demonstrates experimentation and innovation in dramatic and poetic forms and techniques.
- 3) It is deeply influenced by the Renaissance spirit, especially by the Renaissance literature of Italy, France, and Spain.
- 4) In style it exhibits romantic exuberance.
- 5) Its writers are all men (not women) from all classes of the society.
- 6) It is an age of exquisite poetry, unparalleled drama and splendid prose.
- 7) It marks a shift from man's Fate to his free will.
- 8) It develops English language to a level of stable standard.



- 9) Its spirit ranges from the Platonic idealism or the delightful romance to the level of gross realism.
- 10) The literature of this age shows a quest for "the remote, the wonderful and the beautiful".
- 11) It reflects original romanticism that revived during the beginning of Romantic Age in 1798.
- 12) It initiates literary criticism.

### (b) Jacobean Age (1603-1625)

The age is named after James I who reigned over England from 1603 to 1625. The word "Jacobean" is derived from "Jacobus", the Latin version of James. Some historians like to call the last five years of this age as a part of another age which they call the **Puritan Age** (1620-1660). They call it so because between 1620 and 1660 Puritanism became the driving force in the life and literature of England.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) Colonial territories were expanded.
- (2) Religious conflict that subsided in the Elizabethan Age, revived in this period. Protestants were divided into three sects: (1) Anglicans, (2) Presbyterians and (3) Puritans.
- (3) Renaissance's influence continued.
- (4) Scotland was brought under the rule of the King of England.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Shakespeare who had started writing in the Elizabethan Period wrote twelve serious plays in this period. Those plays are:

1. *Measure for Measure* (1604)
2. *Othello* (1604)
3. *Macbeth* (1605)
4. *King Lear* (1605)
5. *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606)
6. *Coriolanus* (1606)
7. *Timon of Athens* (unfinished-1608)

8. *Pericles* (in part-1608)
9. *Cymbeline* (1609)
10. *The Winter's Tale* (1610)
11. *The Tempest* (1611)
12. *Henry VIII* (in part-1613)

Though Shakespeare wrote these serious plays in the Jacobean Age, he is called an Elizabethan dramatist and never the Jacobean. The period (1590-1616) in which he wrote his plays, is also called *Shakespearean Age*.

Ben Jonson who had started writing in the Elizabethan Period wrote his famous plays in this period:

*Volpone* (1605)  
*The Silent Woman* (1609)  
*The Alchemist* (1610)

Francis Bacon continued writing in this period:

*Advancement of Learning* (1605)  
*Novum Orgum* (1620)

Some new essays were added to the new edition of his *Essays* (1625)

- \* King James I, known as the **Wisest Fool**, instituted the translation of the Bible into English in 1611. *The Authorized King James Bible* appears in 1611 and its language became the benchmark of English language.

John Webster (1580-1625):

*The White Devil* (1612)  
*The Duchess of Malfi* (1614)

Cyril Tourneur (1575-1626):

*The Revenger's Tragedy* (1600)  
*The Athelst's Tragedy* (1611)

John Donne (1572-1631) and George Herbert (1593-1633), the metaphysical poets, started writing in this period.

**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) The elegance and felicity of Elizabethan verse disappear.
- 2) The Platonic idealism which had been the main spirit of the Elizabethan era almost dies out.
- 3) Renaissance's spirit still remains the main influence.
- 4) Drama continues to dominate the literary scene.
- 5) Classical rules of drama are maintained by Ben Jonson.
- 6) Poetry takes a new and startling turn.
- 7) Decadence of art begins.
- 8) English language develops further.
- 9) Masque is innovated.
- 10) Satiric art begins.

**(c) Caroline Age (1625-1649)**

This age is named after Charles I who reigned over England from 1625 to 1649. "Caroline" is derived from "Carolus", the Latin version of "Charles". This age is also a part of the Puritan Age (1620-1660).

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) There was a civil war between "Cavaliers" and "Roundheads". Those who supported the King were called "**Cavaliers**". Most of them were lords and their dependants. "**Roundheads**" were those who supported parliament. Most of them were puritans.

A group of lyric poets associated with the "Cavaliers" are called "**Cavalier poets**". Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, Robert Herrick and Thomas Carew were the members of this group. These poets are also called **Sons of Ben** as they were the admirers and followers of Ben Jonson. Their poems are trivial, gay, witty and often licentious.

- (2) In 1642 English theatre was officially closed. On 14 June 1643 Licensing Order for printing was passed.

- (3) The Cavaliers were defeated; the King was caught and publicly beheaded on 30th January, 1649. His death marked the dissolution of monarchy for the time being.
- (4) English colonies were further expanded.
- (5) Oliver Cromwell emerged as a puritan leader and came to power in 1649.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Donne and Herbert continued writing their metaphysical poetry. Henry Vaughan (1621-95) and Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) also wrote metaphysical poetry.

John Milton (1608-74):

*Comus* (1634)

*Lycidas* (1637)

"Of Education" (1644)

"Areopagitica" (1644)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Drama declines significantly.
- 2) Literature reflects revival of moral and intellectual awakening.
- 3) Elizabethan enthusiasm and national spirit disappear.
- 4) Literary scenario is overshadowed by gloom and pessimism.
- 5) Critical and intellectual spirit replaces natural outpouring of heart.
- 6) Renaissance's influence continues.
- 7) Three types of poetry appear: puritan poetry, metaphysical poetry and cavalier poetry.
- 8) Cavalier poets appear and disappear; their straightforward, erotic short poems with the motto "carpe diem" disappear with them.
- 9) Sermons, pamphlets, history and philosophy are written in prose.



### **(d) Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)**

This period, like the previous two periods, belonged to the Puritan Age. Only in this period there was no monarch in England. After the death of Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, the puritan leader, came to power. He died in 1658 when his son Richard Cromwell became the ruler of England. He ruled England till 1660. In this period Puritanism became gradually unpopular. The English people realized that monarchy was essential for them.

#### **Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:**

John Milton did not write anything important in this period.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), a political philosopher:

*Leviathan* (1651)

Jeremy Taylor (1613-67):

*Holy Living* (1650), a sermon in prose

*Holy Dying* (1651), a sermon in prose

Vaughan (1621-95) and Marvell (1621-78) continued writing

The influence of Renaissance and Puritanism died out by the end of this period. The Elizabethan romantic exuberance ended in this period.

### **4. The Neoclassical Period (1660-1785)**

The age is called **Neoclassical** or **Pseudo-classical Age** to mean the artificiality of the writers of this age. They imitated the ancient Greek and Roman literary tradition but lacked the originality of the writers of that period.

#### **Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- (1) The writers of this age imitated the style of the ancient Greek and Roman writers.
- (2) Much attention is paid to technical perfection rather than innovation or natural genius.

- (3) Human beings are given most importance. The literary ideal of the age is "art for man's sake", not "art for art's sake".
- (4) General rather than the individual qualities of human beings are given more importance.
- (5) Sophistication in thought and style is emphasized.

The Neoclassical Age comprises three shorter ages:

- (a) The Restoration Period (1660-1700)
- (b) The Augustan Age (1702-1745)
- (c) The Age of Sensibility ((1745-85)

### **(a) The Restoration Period (1660-1700)**

This period is called the Restoration Period because in this period, with the restoration of monarchy, the English literary tradition was restored. In the Commonwealth Period Charles II, the son of Charles I, escaped to France. After the death of Richard Cromwell the people of England brought him back and made him King of England on May 29, 1660. He remained in power till his death in 1685 when James II, another son of Charles I, ascended the throne. He was a Catholic and most of the people who were Protestants wanted to dethrone him. In 1688 there was the **Glorious Revolution** (Bloodless Revolution) against him. He fled to France. William III of France, the husband of Mary, the daughter of James II, came to power. William ruled England till his death in 1702.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. A general reaction against puritanical restraints became very strong.
2. Two political parties - the Whig and the Tory - were formed. The Whigs were against the King and for the Protestants. The Tories supported the King and the Catholics.
3. In 1690 there was Jacobite Rising. The Catholics of Ireland, who were led by James II, fought against William's soldiers and were defeated.
4. In 1662 the Royal Society was founded to promote scientific research. Sir Isaac Newton was a member of it.

5. In 1695 the press was made free. Everyone was given liberty to express his or her views.
6. The Bill of Rights was adopted in 1689. It curtailed the monarch's power and increased parliament's power.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

John Milton (1608-74):

He started writing in the previous age, wrote his great epics in this period. He remained almost unaffected by the looseness of the Restoration Period.

*Paradise Lost* (1667), the **great epic in English**

*Paradise Regained* (1671)

*Samson Agonistes* (1671)

Samuel Butler (1612-80):

*Hudibras* (1663), a satire in verse

John Bunyan (1628-88):

*The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), the **famous allegory in prose**

John Dryden (1631-1700):

*All for Love* (1778)

*The Indian Emperor* (1665)

*Aureng-Zebe* (1675)

*Absalom and Achitophel* (1681)

*MacFlecknoe* (1682)

"The Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1668)

John Locke (1632-1704):

*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)

William Wycherley (1640-1715):

*The Country Wife* (1675)

*The Plain Dealer* (1676)

Aphra Behn (1640-1689):

*The Rover* (1677), a Restoration comedy

*Oroonoko* (1688), a prose fiction

William Congreve (1670-1729):

*The Double Dealer* (1693)

*Love for Love* (1695)

*The Way of the World* (1700)

George Farquhar (1678-1707):

*The Recruiting Officer* (1706)

*The Beaux's Stratagem* (1707)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Imitation of the ancient Greek and Roman writers gives rise to Neo-classicism.
- 2) Puritan controls loosen and a wave of foppery and vulgarity sweeps the creative works.
- 3) Great English epics are written with proper elegance and grandeur.
- 4) Drama returns with the then French licentiousness and gaiety; it loses Elizabethan seriousness and splendour.
- 5) Comedy of manners and heroic tragedy become major dramatic genres.
- 6) Translation of great classical texts starts appearing.
- 7) Satirical verse becomes popular.
- 8) Literature of two extremes co-exists: Great epics, like *Paradise Lost*, and the moral wisdom, like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, are written. At the same time sensual comedies, like *The Country Wife*, are also written.

### (b) The Augustan Age (1702-1745)

This age is called Augustan Age because the writers of this period imitated the style and elegance of the writers who wrote in Italy during the reign of the Emperor Augustus (27 B.C.-14 A.D). This span of time is also called the **Age of Pope** because Alexander Pope was the best known poet of the time. During these years England was ruled by Queen Anne (1702-14), George I (1714-27) and George II (1727-60).



*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. Scotland was annexed to England.
2. Jacobite rising continued.
3. The first cabinet of England was formed.
4. The **first English daily** newspaper, "The Daily Courant", appeared in London in 1702.
5. The number of coffee houses, pubs and clubs was multiplied and people learned the habit of living together.
6. A number of literary associations started. Of them the most famous was the **Scriblerus Club**. The members of this club were Alexander Pope, John Gay, John Arbuthnot, Jonathan Swift and Thomas Parnell. The other clubs of this period were **Kit-cat Club** and the **Spectator's Club**.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Daniel Defoe (1659-1731):

*Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745):

*The Battle of the Books* (1704)

*A Tale of a Tub* (1704)

*Gulliver's Travels* (1726)

Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729):

*The Tatler* and *The Spectator* (1709-1712).

- ★ Addison wrote 274 out of total 555 essays published in them and Steele wrote the rest.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744):

*The Rape of the Lock* (1712)

*Dunciad* (1728)

*Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735)

*An Essay on Criticism* (1711)

Samuel Richardson (1689-1761):

*Pamela* or *Virtue Rewarded* (1740), the **first English novel**

Henry Fielding (1707-54):

*Joseph Andrews* (1742), a novel

**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) Neo-classical spirit continues.
- 2) Poetry becomes a visual as well as a verbal art following Horace's theory "as in painting, so in poetry" ("Ut pictura poesis").
- 3) Precise, formal and elegant become the standard style of writing.
- 4) Moderation, realism and rationalism become the main principles of creative works.
- 5) The regular pentameter couplet and blank verse are developed to the best possible perfection.
- 6) Lyric poetry loses dominance.
- 7) Satirical verse continues.
- 8) Satirical prose appears; it blends fact and fiction in new forms, such as, biographies, travelogues, political allegories, and romantic tales.
- 9) Novels and journalism begin.
- 10) Translation of great classical texts continues.
- 11) Wit or inventiveness, and aptness of descriptive images or metaphors become major literary devices.
- 12) Literature mirrors political awareness.
- 13) Urban culture overpowers literature.

**(c) The Age of Sensibility ((1745-85)**

This age is called the Age of Sensibility because reason, sensible views and "original genius" controlled the literature of the time. It is also called the **Age of Johnson** after the name of Dr. Samuel Johnson who dominated this period. This age started after Pope's death and ended with the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. James Watt invented steam engine in 1769. In 1733 John Kay invented the flying shuttle. In 1764 Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny. All these contributed to the **Industrial Revolution**.

2. Industrial towns appeared.
3. There was revolution in agricultural production.
4. The British founded its empire in India in 1757 and lost its American colony in 1776.
5. **French Revolution** started in 1789 and continued till 1799. Voltaire (1694-1778) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) taught individualism and inspired revolution for more freedom and equality. During the reign of Louis XVI of France (whose wife was Marie Antoinette) there were several social inequalities among the people. The King and the nobility were enjoying all the good things of the country and the common people were deprived of their due shares. The law of the country was not equal for all classes of people. The existing social injustices prompted the great revolution known as the French Revolution in 1789. The slogan of the revolution was "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity". The King along with his Queen was overthrown by the common people. This revolution had tremendous effect on the life and literature of the people of England.
6. In 1764 Dr. Johnson founded his famous literary club known as **Johnson's Literary Club**; its members were Burke, Pitt, Fox, Gibbon, Goldsmith and a few other great persons of the time.
7. The development of industry and commerce, the rise of political parties and democracy created problems and a change in the social infrastructure ensued.
8. A literate middle class grew and the range of reading public widened.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

1. Samuel Richardson (1689-1761):

\* He had started writing novels in the previous age and wrote the following novels in this age.

*Clarissa Harlowe* (1748)

*Sir Charles Grandison* (1754)

2. Henry Fielding (1707-54):
  - \* He had started writing novels in the previous age and wrote the following novels in this age.
    - Tom Jones* (1749)
    - Amelia* (1751)
3. Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-84):
  - Dictionary* (1755)
  - The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (1759)
  - "Preface to Shakespeare" (1765)
  - The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (1779-81)
4. Thomas Gray (1716-71):
  - "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751)
5. Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74):
  - The Citizen of the World* (1759)
  - The Vicar of the Wakefield* (1766)
6. Edmund Burke (1729-97):
  - "On American Taxation" (1774)
  - "Speech on Conciliation with America" (1775)
  - "Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill" (1783)
7. Edward Gibbon (1737-94):
  - The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) The Restoration spirit dies away.
- 2) The age marks a gradual change in poetic taste and techniques.
- 3) The heroic couplet and blank verse decline and the ballad and lyric revive.
- 4) Pindaric ode appears.
- 5) Intellectual prose writings flourished.
- 6) The novel takes a definite shape and rises to dominate the literary scene.
- 7) Poetry shifts its focus from intensely social issues to melancholy, isolation, and reflection.
- 8) Features of romanticism that flourishes in the next age come into view.
- 9) Literary criticism finds a solid ground.



## 5. The Romantic Period (1798-1832)

The age began in 1798 with the first edition of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* and ended with the first Reformation Act in 1832. However, it is worth noting that the signs of Romantic literature came into view around 1785 when William Blake started writing his *Songs of Innocence*. This period is also called the **Revival of Romanticism** because the romantic ideals of the Elizabethan Period revived during these years. *Lyrical Ballads* brought about a great change in literature, both in subject and style. Instead of urban people and grand style, rural people and common language were preferred.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. After the French Revolution it was accepted that every individual was free and equally important.
2. Small industries disappeared and large industries with huge capital started.
3. Machines were widely introduced in coal and iron mines which multiplied productions.
4. Steam-engines were used in ships and trains. The train was first introduced in 1830.
5. Industrialization created lots of slums, child labour and labour problems.
6. The traditional social pattern started changing.
7. Ireland was united with England in 1801.
8. In 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act was passed and religious equity was ensured.
9. Use of machines in fields and industries made a large number of women jobless; of them many became either readers or writers.
10. In 1840 the Penny Post was introduced.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

William Blake (1757-1827):

*Songs of Innocence* (1789)

*Songs of Experience* (1794)

William Wordsworth (1770-1850):

*Lyrical Ballads* (1798)

*The Prelude* (1850) and other poems

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834):

*Biographia Literaria* (1817)

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1798) and other poems.

Jane Austen (1775-1817):

★ She was an anti-romantic novelist in the Romantic Age. She is called so because of her stern attitude against youthful passion.

*Pride and Prejudice* (1797)

*Sense and Sensibility* (1797-98)

*Mansfield Park* (1814)

*Emma* (1816)

Charles Lamb (1775-1834):

*The Essays of Elia* (1823)

*The Last Essays of Elia* (1833)

William Hazlitt (1778-1830):

★ He was a famous critic.

*The Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* (1820)

*The Spirit of the Age* (1825)

Lord Byron (1788-1824):

*The Vision of Judgement* (1822)

*Don Juan* (1824)

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822):

*Prometheus Unbound* (1820)

*Adonais* (1821) and other poems

John Keats (1795-1821):

*Endymion* (1818)

*Hyperion* (1820)

*Odes and Other Poems*

*Letters*

**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) Creative enthusiasm reached almost the level of Elizabethan creative force.
- 2) It shifts its focus from earlier age's faith in reason to faith in senses, intuition, and imagination.
- 3) Subjective poetry replaces the objective poetry of the neo-classical age.
- 4) It values common, "natural" man and rejects artificial urban life as subject of poetry.
- 5) The language of common men, not the artificial "poetic diction" of the previous age, becomes the choice of the time.
- 6) It idealizes country life and "nature" becomes a means of divine revelation.
- 7) Romantic poetry reflects rebellious views against oppression, restraints, and controls. It celebrates human rights and individualism.
- 8) Romantic literature shows interest in the medieval past, the supernatural, the mystical, the "gothic," and the exotic.
- 9) It emphasizes introspection, psychology, melancholy, and sadness.
- 10) Myth and symbolism get prominence.
- 11) In style, the Romantic poetry prefers spontaneity and free experimentation to strict conventional "rules" of composition, genre, and decorum. It prefers highly suggestive language to the neoclassical ideal of clarity and precision.
- 12) Lyric poetry dominates.
- 13) Women fiction flourishes. Mrs. Anne Radcliffe, Jane Porter, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen are female writers of the time.
- 14) Criticism becomes an inseparable part of literature. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Lamb, De Quincey and Hazlitt contribute to it.

## 6. The Victorian Period (1832-1901)

This age is named after Queen Victoria who reigned over England from 1837 to 1901. It may be noticed that though Queen Victoria came to power in 1837, the Victorian Period began in 1832, five years before the accession of Queen Victoria, because the literary features of the new age became obvious during 1832. The twelve years, from 1848 to 1860, of this age is called the **Age of the Pre-Raphaelites** because the artists of that time followed the art forms used before the period of Raphael (1483-1520), the Italian artist. D. G. Rossetti, W. H. Hunt and J. Millais formed this group and later on Christina Rossetti, W. Morris and A. Swinburne joined them. Originally it was a movement for the painters but eventually these ideals took the shape of a literary movement. Medievalism, symbolism, sensuousness, truthfulness and simplicity are the main features of the Pre-Raphaelites. The last two decades (1880-1901) of this period is called the **Age of Aestheticism**. In reaction against the Victorian moral obsession it was held that art should have its end in itself, which lies in its beauty and formal perfection. These decades also called **Decadence** because there was a fall and decay of the Victorian spirit and standard in these years.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. The First Reformation Act in 1832, the Second Reformation Act in 1867 and the Third Reformation Act in 1884 gave voting rights to every male and brought about significant changes in social life.
2. In 1833 slaves were declared free.
3. Chimney Sweeps Act in 1840 and Factory Act in 1833 prohibited child labour.
4. Mechanism of railways and ships was improved which helped develop overseas commerce and industry, and thus, brought material affluence.



5. There was a significant progress of women during this time.
6. Agriculture based society was disintegrated as the result of the development of industry. This had a strong effect on the rural people.
7. The theory of evolution and the concept of communism changed the traditional view of life and religion.
8. The Fabian Society was founded in 1883 to avoid violence in class-struggle. G.B. Shaw was one of the members of this society.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59):

*History of England* (1849-61)

Cardinal Newman (1801-1890):

*The Idea of a University*

*Loss and Gain*

John Stuart Mill (1806-73):

*On Liberty* (1859)

*Utilitarianism* (1863)

*The Subjection of Women* (1869)

Charles Robert Darwin (1809-82):

*The Origin of Species* (1859)

*The Descent of Man* (1871)

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-92):

★ He is best known for his melodious language.

*Poems* (1833)

*In Memoriam* (1850)

*Maud and other Poems* (1855)

Edward Fitzgerald (1809-83):

*The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1859), translated into English from Persian

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-1865):

★ She is popularly known as Mrs. Gaskell.

*Mary Barton* (1848)

*Cranford* (1853)

*Ruth* (1853)

*North and South* (1855)

*Sylvia's Lovers* (1863)

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63):

*Vanity Fair* (1848)

*The Virginians* (1859)

Charles Dickens (1812-70):

*The Pickwick Papers* (1836)

*Oliver Twist* (1837)

*David Copperfield* (1850)

*Bleak House* (1852)

*A Tale of Two Cities* (1859)

*Great Expectations* (1861)

Robert Browning (1812-89):

★ He is famous for his dramatic monologues.

*Dramatic Lyrics* (1842)

*Men and Women* (1855)

*Dramatis Personae* (1864)

Charlotte Brontë (1816-55):

*Jane Eyre* (1847)

*Shirley* (1849)

*Villette* (1853)

*The Professor* (1857)

Emily Brontë (1818-48):

*Wuthering Heights* (1847)

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Karl Marx (1818-83):

*Das Kapital* (1867)

George Eliot (1819-80):

★ Her real name is *Mary Ann Evans*.

*The Mill on the Floss* (1860)

*Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858)

*Adam Bede* (1859)

*Silas Marner* (1861)

*Romola* (1863)

*Middlemarch* (1871-72)

Herman Melville (1819-1891):

*Moby-Dick* (1851)

*Bartleby, the Scrivener* (1853)

Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880):

*Madame Bovary* (1857)

*Sentimental Education* (1869)

*The Temptation of Saint Anthony* (1874)

Matthew Arnold (1822-88):

★ He was a poet and a critic, known for his strong moral voice.

"Essays in Criticism" (1888)

*Culture and Anarchy* (1867) and some poems

Mark Twain (1835-1910):

★ His real name is *Samuel Langhorne Clemens*.

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885)

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928):

★ He was a regional novelist and a poet.

*The Return of the Native* (1878)

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886)

*Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891)

Henry James (1843-1916):

- Daisy Miller* (1879)
- The American* (1877)
- The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)
- The Tragic Muse* (1890)
- The Spoils of Poyton* (1897)

Frederick Nietzsche (1844-1900):

- The Birth of Tragedy* (1872)
- Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1885)
- The Antichrist* (1895)

Oscar Wilde (1856-1900):

- \* He was a poet, novelist and dramatist.

- Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892)
- A Woman of No Importance* (1893)
- An Ideal Husband* (1895)
- The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950):

- \* He was a modern dramatist, famous for his 'drama of ideas'.

- Arms and the Man* (1894)
- You Never Can Tell* (1898)
- Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1898)

George Robert Gissing (1857-1903):

- The Nether World* (1889)
- Born in Exile* (1892)
- Denzil Quarrier* (1892)
- The Odd Women* (1893)
- The Paying Guest* (1895)
- The Whirlpool* (1897)
- Charles Dickens: A Critical Study* (1898)



Kenneth Grahame (1859-1932):

*Pagan Papers* (1893)

*The Golden Age* (1895)

*Dream Days* (1898)

*The Reluctant Dragon* (1898)

*The Headwoman* (1898)

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936):

*The Jungle Book* (1894)

*Departmental Ditties* (1886)

*Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888)

*Soldiers Three* (1890)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Victorian literature shifts from the Romantic utopianism to utilitarianism, from the Romantic imagination to reality, from the Romantic common man to middle class.
- 2) Victorian attitude to nature also changes. To the Romantics it was kind and harmonious; to the Victorians it is harsh and cruel.
- 3) Prudery and morality become the controlling principles of creative works.
- 4) It encourages "compromise and construction".
- 5) In the early part of the age literature chooses "art for life's sake" as the principle of art and asserts didactic purposes.
- 6) The mass of writings of this age reflects a highly idealized notion of "proper behaviour".
- 7) A dualism of reason and emotion, materialism and mysticism, religion and science or faith and doubt, freedom and restriction is very common in the literature of this period.
- 8) Poets, novelists and essayists of this age emphasize truth, justice, brotherhood, peace and stability.
- 9) Dramatic monologue and elegy are popular poetic forms of the age. Isolation, loss of faith, despair and emancipation of women are common themes of poems. Classical myths are retold in poems.

- 10) The novel becomes the domineering literary form in the Victorian Period. A typical Victorian novel has a long and complicated plot, an omniscient narrator whose comments on wrong and right serve moral purposes. It has a setting in a known city, a child protagonist, social and humanitarian themes, deeper character analyses, irony in the description and justification of all events in the final chapter. Its common subjects are exploitation of women and children, terrible living conditions, industrial civilization, lost identity, etc. A good number of novels written by women raise the feminist issues.
- 11) Towards the end of this period most of these features of the Victorian Age gradually disappear. A new movement known as the *Decadence* started. It brings back "art for art's sake". It emphasizes sensationalism, egocentricity, the bizarre, the artificial, etc. in literature. Swinburne, Dowson, Pater, Morris and the Rossettis are the writers of this group.

## 7. The Modern Period (1901-1939)

The period between 1901 and 1939 is generally accepted as the Modern Age of English literature. Queen Victoria's death in 1901 marks the beginning of this new literary era and the beginning of the Second World War in 1939 indicates its end. Modernism is more than a literary phenomenon; it is inclusive of many art forms that flourished in European countries including England.

The Modern Period comprises two shorter ages:

- (a) The Edwardian Period (1901-1910)
- (b) The Georgian Period (1911-1936)

### (a) Edwardian Period (1901-1910)

The first decade of the twentieth century (1901-1910) is called Edwardian Age due to the fact that King Edward VII reigned over England during this decade. Some historians, however, think that the literary trends of this age continued until the outbreak of World War

I in 1914; there are some others who think that those trends continued until the end of the First World War in 1918. Opinions about the end of this age vary because the literary features of this period did not have sharp closing point in time.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. The Edwardian Age covers a transitional time between Victorian stability and the impending holocaust of the First World War.
2. The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 1901.
3. In 1902 the *Second Boer War* in South Africa split Britain into anti- and pro-war factions and the conflict eventually resulted in power reduction of the parliamentarians.
4. "Women's Social and Political Union" founded in Manchester in 1903.
5. "First Congress for Freudian Psychology" was held in Salzburg in 1908.
6. The first transatlantic wireless signals were sent by Guglielmo Marconi.
7. Pablo Picasso started "cubism" between 1907 and 1911.
8. Albert Einstein published his theory of relativity in 1905.
9. Earnest Rutherford published his book on radioactivity.
10. The Wright Brothers invented the airplane engine and flew for the first time in 1908.
11. *The Old-Age Pensions Act* was passed in 1908. It began as one of the foundations of modern social welfare.
12. *The Poor Law* that was passed in 1834 had serious effect on gender conditions.
13. Although abortion was illegal, it was nevertheless the most widespread form of birth control in use.
14. *Irish National Theatre* was founded in Dublin.
15. The working classes were beginning to protest politically for a greater voice in government and the level of industrial unrest on economic issues was high in 1908.
16. First women in the world get to vote in Finland in 1906.
17. British class system remained rigid.

18. Rapid industrialization deeply affected the social norms: interest in socialism increased, better economic opportunities demanded, the plight of the poor drew attention and the status of women and their demand for the right to vote surfaced.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Henry James (1843-1916):

*The Wings of the Dove* (1902)

*The Ambassadors* (1903)

*The Golden Bowl* (1904)

Andrew Cecil Bradley (1851-1935):

- \* He is better known as A. C. Bradley, a famous critic on Shakespeare.

*Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904)

*Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (1909)

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950):

- \* He started writing in the previous age. He is a modern dramatist, famous for his 'drama of ideas'.

*The Devil's Disciple* (1901)

*Caesar and Cleopatra* (1901)

*The Philanderer* (1902)

*Man and Superman* (1903)

*Major Barbara* (1905)

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924):

*The Nigger of the Narcissus*, published in the previous age in 1898

*Lord Jim* (1900)

*Heart of Darkness* (1902)

*The End of the Tether* (1902)

*Typhoon* (1903)

*Nostromo* (1904)

*The Mirror of the Sea* (1906)

*The Secret Agent* (1907)



Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936):

*Kim* (1901)

*Just So Stories* (1902)

*Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906)

*Rewards and Fairies* (1910)

John Millington Synge (1871-1909):

\* He was an Irish dramatist.

*In the Shadow of the Glen* (1903)

*Riders to the Sea* (1904)

*The Well of the Saints* (1905)

*The Playboy of the Western World* (1907)

*The Tinker's Wedding* (1907)

*Deirdre of the Sorrows* (1910)

Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936):

*Heretics* (1905)

*Charles Dickens: A Critical Study* (1906)

*The Man Who Was Thursday: A Nightmare* (1908)

*Orthodoxy* (1908)

Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1970):

*Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905)

*A Room with a View* (1908)

*Howards End* (1910)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) The changes in economy brought new-found wealth and new demands. Literature of the time reflects indulgence in cuisine, fashion, entertainment and travels.
- 2) Advances in science had profound effect on life and literature. Automobile, electricity, radio, film, etc. opened new possibilities for art and artists.
- 3) The writers' attitude to the voice of the authority is critical unlike the submissive attitude of the Victorian writers.

- 4) The Victorian style still continues.
- 5) Women issues come to light in literary works.
- 6) The poor finds a stronger voice in literature.
- 7) Emphasis on moral conduct and prudery declines.
- 8) Greater awareness of human rights influences writings.
- 9) The late Victorian decadents' belief in "art for art's sake" continues. A sense of detachment alienates the serious artists from the general readers because of this belief. This resulted in a wide gap between serious works and popular works.
- 10) A mass reading public emerges as a consequence of the Education Act in 1870 for compulsory primary education. Consequently, popular fiction was in great demand.
- 11) Many authors turn away from the Victorians' optimism and their self-imposed duty of civilizing the world (the white man's burden). These authors satirize Victorian values.
- 12) The advance of psychoanalysis has a deep impact on the creative works of this period.
- 13) The progress in comparative mythology has introduced the intelligentsia to the study of different belief systems. It has affected writers' faith in Christianity as the only correct faith.

### (b) Georgian Period (1911-1936)

The period between 1910 and 1936 is called Georgian Period after the name of George V who reigned over England during these years. It is the second phase of the Modern Age. However, literary features of the Modern Age continued till 1939, the year in which the Second World War broke out. For this reason, it is generally agreed that the Modern Age ended in 1939.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) The Victorian peace and order was no more. Unrest and violence engulfed life.

- (2) Imperialism became a disturbing factor in the world. For colonial supremacy European nations engaged in rivalry that led to the First World War (1914-18). This war marks the end of Victorian optimism.
- (3) Socialism had great influence on the English life and thought. Class feeling became stronger.
- (4) The Fabian Society which was founded in 1883 now started transition of land and industrial capital from individuals to collective ownership in a peaceful way.
- (5) In 1918 women gained right to vote in Great Britain.
- (6) The First World War and its aftermath changed the traditional way of life.
- (7) The **National Guilds League** established in 1914 worked out the programmes of guild socialism for gradual change from capitalism to socialism without any violence. Bertrand Russell was one of the members of it.
- (8) In the twenties and thirties frustration and discontent paralysed life.
- (9) The **Rhymers' Club** was formed. The members of the club concentrated on the beauty of sound and ornamentation of subject. W.B. Yeats was a member of this club for some time.
- (10) Four anthologies entitled *Georgian Poetry* (1911-1922) were published.
- (11) Press tycoons started mass-audience newspapers.
- (12) "Dadaism", "Surrealism", "Imagism", "Impressionism" and "Expressionism" flourished as art movements.
- (13) The Titanic sank in 1912.
- (14) The **October Revolution** began in Russia in 1917.
- (15) W. B. Yeats won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923 and G. B. Shaw in 1926.
- (16) Foundation was laid for British Commonwealth of Nations.
- (17) Irish demand for independence became stronger.
- (18) World War II broke out in 1939.

**Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:**

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) wrote most of his novels in the earlier period. In this period he wrote his poems and short stories.

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950):

*Pygmalion* (1913)

*Heartbreak House* (1921)

*Saint Joan* (1924)

*The Apple Cart* (1929)

*Too True to Be Good* (1932)

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939):

★ He was a psychologist known for his theory of psycho-analysis.

*Interpretation of Dreams* (trans. 1913)

*Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (trans. (1914)

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924):

*Under Western Eyes* (1911)

*Chance* (1913)

*Victory* (1915)

*The Shadow Line* (1917)

*The Rescue* (1920)

*The Rover* (1923)

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939):

★ He was a poet, dramatist and critic, famous for his use of symbolism and mysticism.

*The Resurrection* (1913)

*The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919)

*The Cat and the Moon* (1926)

*The Tower* (1928)

*The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1933)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), a philosopher:

*Mysticism and Logic* (1918)

*The Analysis of Mind* (1921)

*History of Western Philosophy* (1946), published in the Post-modern age.

*Authority and the Individual* (1949), published in the Post-modern age.



William Somerset Maugham (1874-1965):

- \* He was a novelist and short story writer.

*The Sacred Flame* (1928)

*Cakes and Ale* (1930)

*The Razor's Edge* (1944), published in the Post-modern age.

John Edward Masefield (1878-1967):

*The Midnight Folk* (1922)

*Collected Poems* (1923)

*The Bird of Dawning* (1933)

*Dead Ned* (1938)

Edward Morgan Forster (1897-1970):

*A Passage to India* (1924)

*Aspects of Novel* (1927), a critical work

*The Celestial Omnibus* (1911), a collection of short stories

*The Eternal Moment and Other Stories* (1928)

Pelham Grenville Wodehouse (1881-1975):

- \* He is better known as P.G. Wodehouse. He is famous for his use of language. He wrote about 96 books.

*The Man with Two Left Feet* (1917)

*Jeeves* (1923)

*Blandings Castle* (1935)

*Lord Emsworth and Others* (1937)

James Joyce (1882-1941):

- \* He was a novelist, famous for his narrative technique known as stream of consciousness.

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)

*Exiles* (1918)

*Ulysses* (1922)

*Finnegans Wake* (1939)

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), a feminist:

*The Voyage Out* (1915)

*Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)

*To the Lighthouse* (1927)

*The Waves* (1931)

*Flush* (1933)

*The Years* (1937)

Franz Kafka (1883-1924):

★ He was a novelist, short story writer and an **existentialist**.

*The Metamorphosis* (1915)

*The Trial* (1925)

*The Castle* 1926)

*Amerika* (1927)

David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930), a **novelist**:

*The White Peacock* (1911)

*Sons and Lovers* (1913)

*The Rainbow* (1915)

*Women in Love* (1921)

*Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928)

Ezra Pound (1885-1972):

★ He is one of the exponents of "Imagism". He wrote a two-line poem as an example of **imagist poetry**: Here is the poem:

**"In a Station of the Metro"**

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough.

His major writings are:

*Umbræ: Collected Poems* (1920)

*Cantos I-XXVII* (1925-28)

*Literary Essays* (1954)

*Make It New* (1934)

Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888-1965):

- \* He was a poet, dramatist, literary critic, and an editor. His theory of 'objective co-relative' is very famous.

*Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917)

"The Waste Land" (1922)

*Poems* (1919)

*Selected Essays 1917-1932* (1932)

*Four Quartets* (1942)

*Murder in the Cathedral* (1935)

*The Family Reunion* (1939)

*The Cocktail Party* (1950), published in the Post-modern age.

Henry Miller (1891-1980):

*Tropic of Cancer* (1934)

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald (1896-1940):

*The Great Gatsby* (1925)

*Tender Is the Night* (1934)

*The Love of the Last Tycoon* (1941)

William Cuthbert Faulkner (1897-1962):

*The Sound and the Fury* (1929)

*As I Lay Dying* (1930)

*Light in August* (1932)

*Absalom, Absalom!* (1936)

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899-1961):

*The Sun Also Rises* (1926)

*A Farewell to Arms* (1929)

*The Old Man and the Sea*, published in the next age in 1952

Graham Greene (1904-91):

*It's a Battlefield* (1934)

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973):

*Poems* (1930)

*The Oxford Book of Light Verse* (1938)

Dylan Marlais Thomas (1914-53):

*Twenty-five Poems* (1936)

**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) The poets who published their poems in four anthologies entitled *Georgian Poetry* (1911-1922) are called "Georgian Poets". Georgian poetry is rural in subject matter, delicate in manner and traditional in form and technique. W.W. Gibson, Rupert Brooke, J. Masfield and Ralph Hodgson are among the best known Georgian poets.
- 2) However, in the 1920s and 1930s poets' search for a new poetic tradition is noteworthy. The late Victorians (Decadents) give way to the Georgians. Then the Imagists replace the Georgians but after a few years they themselves disappear. In the second decade of the 20th century there has been another movement known as *dadaism*. In the 1920s *surrealism* replaces *dadaism*. There have also been experiments with "impressionism" and "expressionism".
- 3) The disillusionment of the hope for a better world following the First World War finds expression in the poetry of this period. New writers in the 1930s find socialism and communism as the possible solution to overcome the economic depression caused by the First World War. With the change of subject and attitude, the poetic techniques have also been changed. Many Modernist poets imitate techniques of the seventeenth century metaphysical poets. Thus, these poets have wanted to break away from the convention, but at the same time, they are not entirely against tradition. They introduce *verse libres* or free verse. Symbols, conceits, allusions, and quotations are so frequently used that poetry becomes obscure. A new kind of poetry composed with the fragments of the old appears.
- 4) The Modern literature is dominated by novels. It is more realistic and more concerned with social problems. Influenced by psychology, modern novelists focus on the inner problems of the characters along with their social problems. Instead of simple,



chronological narrative technique, the use of "stream of consciousness" or the "interior monologue" is accepted as a main narrative technique of novels.

- 5) The drama of the period also becomes realistic. Ibsen, a Norwegian dramatist, deeply influences English dramatic art in mirroring social and family problems. Contemporary problems have been so realistically intellectualized in the drama of this period that these plays, except the plays of Shaw, seem to miss imagination. Poetic drama begins in this period.

## 8. The Post-modern Period (1939...)

The literary trends of the Modern Age started changing after 1939 when the Second World War devastated the social values. After 1939 the new trends in English literature came to light. The writers of the age continued the experimentation of the modernist writers but at the same time reacted against many of the ideas implicit in modernist literature. Moreover, these writers kept on changing their theories of art. Consequently, it has become very difficult to specify the exact characteristics of Post-modern literature. It is believed that the Post-modern age has not yet ended.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. United Nations was formed.
2. The principles of the Enlightenment disappeared.
3. Westerners' belief in progress and purity of knowledge ended.
4. Michael Graves and Philip Johnson, two postmodern architects, stopped using geometric shapes of Modernist architecture and brought historical styles into buildings.
5. Andy Warhol ended the differences between the high-brow and low-brow in Pop Art.

6. Most of the colonies became independent.
7. Universities became the sources of philosophical and literary theories.
8. Jacques, Derrida Michel Foucault and Richard Rorty established the fact that philosophy should no longer seek truth, rather they should concentrate on discussing the various interpretations of reality.
9. Christian faith has lost its hold on life and society.
10. Belief in man's goodness has decreased.
11. Globalization and Information Technology have grown rapidly.
12. There has been a boom in publishing technologies.
13. Cold war and its end left deep impacts on world politics.
14. Germany was divided and united.
15. Radio and TV have played important roles in shaping life.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Henry Miller (1891-1980):

*The Rosy Crucifixion* (1949-59), a trilogy

John Steinbeck (1902-68):

*The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)

*East of Eden* (1952)

George Orwell (1903-50):

★ His real name is *Eric Arthur Blair*.

*Animal Farm* (1945)

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949)

Graham Greene (1904-91):

*The Heart of the Matter* (1948)

*The End of the Affair* (1951)

Jean-Paul Charles Aymard Sartre (1905-1980):

- \* He was a French philosopher, playwright, novelist and political activist. He was one of the exponents of the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology.

*Nausea* (1938)

*Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology* (1943)

*No Exit* (1944)

*The Roads to Freedom* (1949)

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001):

- \* His full name is *Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami*.

*The Dark Room* (1938)

*The Financial Expert* (1952)

*The Guide* (1958)

*A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983)

(The last three are published in the Post-modern age.)

Samuel Beckett (1906-89), a French dramatist:

*Waiting for Godot* (1952)

*Endgame* (1955)

*Happy Days* (1961)

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973):

*The Age of Anxiety* (1948)

William Gerald Golding (1911-93), a novelist:

*Lord of the Flies* (1954)

*The Scorpion God* (1971)

Albert Camus (1913-1960):

*The Outsider* or *The Stranger* (1942)

"The Myth of Sisyphus" (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 1942)

*The Plague* (1947)

Dylan Marlais Thomas (1914-53):

*The Map of Love* (1939)

*Deaths and Entrances* (1946)

*Under Milk Wood* (1954)